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WILSON'S

TALES OF THE BORDERS

AND OF SCOTLAND:

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative.

WITH A GLOSSARY.

Revised by
ALEXANDER LEIGHTON,
ONE OF THE ORIGINAL EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS.

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WILSON'S

TALES OF THE BORDERS,

AND OF SCOTLAND.

BILL STANLEY; OR, A SAILOR'S STORY.

READER, if thou hast never visited the Fern Isles, but intendest to visit them, thou hast a pleasure in reserve—a positive, downright, profitable pleasure—profitable as regards the health of the body, for a trip upon the sea makes the blood feel ten years younger, and dance in the veins as merrily as the waves around us; and profitable also to the mind, by filling it with fresh objects for wonder and contemplation; and it is a fact very generally overlooked, that the poor jaded mind stands as much in need of new objects to work upon, as its plebeian neighbour, the body, stands in need of rest or change of diet. It is a matter of small consequence, whether you go in a yacht or in a steamer; in the former you will have as much pleasure, in the latter more punctuality. But it is a matter of much consequence what sort of company you have on board—in a word, what materials your fellow-voyagers are made of. If they be all your exceedingly good-natured sort of people—people bowed down with politeness and a desire to please—you won't be half an hour at sea till you find them dead as uncorked small beer that has stood an hour in the sun, or insipid as milk and water. I had as lief dine upon dried veal as be mewed up a day with such society. If

you wish to relish the company, and to see character developed, be careful to have it sprinkled with the salt, the pepper, and the mustard of human dispositions; as for the vinegar, even a drop of that would be too much. Sickness might improve your health for the future, but would impair your pleasure for the present; and, in truth, seasickness appears to be as pale, ghostly, and uncomfortable a companion as a man may meet withal. But, if the day be fine, and the breeze moderate, there is but little chance of your being sick. At any rate, you will find about half a pound of well-boiled ham, just as the vessel kisses the salt water, an excellent preventive; and half the pleasure of a sea trip lies in the relish, the *salt*, which it gives to the homeliest morsel.

When the Ferns are first seen, what appeared but two, or, at most, three islands, are now found to be a cluster of sixteen or twenty—the ocean-homes of ten thousand times ten thousand sea-fowls; which now may be seen rising in myriads, blackening the air and covering the surface of the islands, as if a thunder-cloud hung over them—anon their snowy wings flash in the sunbeams, countless specks of light begem the seeming cloud, and flickering for a moment, assume the appearance of a magnificent rainbow instinct with motion,—and, again, as if turning from the flashing of their own beautiful plumage, settle like darkness on the rocks. To appreciate the striking effect of these islands, it is necessary to sail round them, as well as to land upon them. Each appears to be surrounded by a pier or bulwark of nature's masonry. What is termed the Pinnacle Island, is the most impressive. We have been informed that it bears a strong resemblance to St. Helena —the grave of Europe's conqueror. The pinnacles are a mass of perpendicular rocks, representing towers, battlements, and fortifications, apparently as perfect to the eye as if formed by the hands of man, but that their terrible

strength seems to frown in mockery on his puny efforts. They, alone, are worth visiting again and again. They make man feel his own insignificance, and the power of the Omnipotent voice that called into existence the mighty ocean and the wonders of its bosom. Burns, on visiting a place in the Highlands, said it was "enough to make a blockhead a poet;" and we say that the man who could visit the Fern Isles without feeling the influence of poetry within him, has a head as stupid as the sea-fowl that inhabit them, and an imagination as impenetrable as the rocks that compose the pinnacles.

About three years ago, a mixed party left Newcastle, in a steamer, on a pleasure excursion to the islands. Amongst the company, there was a man of a weather-beaten but happy and intelligent countenance, whose age seemed to be at least sixty, and whose general appearance and manners indicated that he was an old seaman, and perhaps had been a purser or a sailing-master in the navy, or the commander of a merchantman, who had made enough to enable him to cast anchor ashore, in peace, quiet, and plenty, for the remainder of his days. His shrewdness, his knowledge, and his humour, soon rendered him a favourite with the company.

On arriving at the islands, the party went on shore; and, dividing themselves into groups, sat down, and spread out their provisions on the rocks; about a dozen prevailed upon the old sailor to accompany them, and to be their messmate. After dinner, they began to sing, and the old tar was called upon for a song.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I never could raise a single stave in my life; but, if it's all one to you, I will spin you a sailor's yarn."

"Agreed," cried they—all! all!"

"Well," began the old seaman, "it was a year or two before the short peace of Amiens, that two young seamen

were sitting in a public-house in North Shields, which I shall please to speak of as the sign of the Old Ship; and its landlord I shall call Mr. Danvers. The name of the one sailor was William Stanley, the other Jack Jenkins. Jack was but a plain fellow, though no lubber; but Bill was a glorious young fellow—the admiration of everybody; though only the son of a poor laundress, who wrought hard to bring him up, while a boy, he had contrived to get knowledge and book-learning enough to have been made commodore of a college. I may here tell you, too, that old Danvers had a daughter called Mary—one of the best and prettiest girls on all Tyneside. She was Bill's consort on all occasions; and they were true to each other as a needle is to the Pole. Jack and he were friends and shipmates; and being sitting together—

"'I say Bill,' said his comrade, 'as we are to sail upon a long voyage to-morrow, what say you for a run up to Newcastle to the theatre to-night? You shall take Polly Danvers, and I shall take my old woman.'" For Jack was married.

"'It is of no use thinking of it,' answered he; 'I am brought up here as though it were my last mooring.'

"'Whew! whew!' whistled the other—'with pretty Polly for a chain cable. But I don't ask you to part company with each other. So let us make ready and start.'

"'No,' added Stanley; 'the best play and the best actors in the world, would be to me to-night like a land-lubber sitting smiling and piping upon a flute on the sea-banks, while I was being dashed to pieces by the breakers under his feet.

"'What are you drifting at, Bill?' said Jenkins; 'your upper works seem to have hoisted a moon-raker.'

"'I am unhappy, Jack,' said he, earnestly, 'and the cause presses like lead upon my heart. It throbs like fire within my forehead. For more than twenty years I have

been tossed about as a helmless vessel, without compass or reckoning. It is hard, Jack, that I can't mention my mother's name, but the blush upon my cheek must dry up the tear that falls for her memory. Three months ago, as you know, I came home, with the earnings of a two years' voyage in my pocket, and I found——O shipmate! when I expected to have flung my savings into my mother's lap, I found her dying in a miserable garret, with scarce a blanket to cover her! She had been long ill; and the rich old rascal called Wates, (who came to this part of the country some years ago, seized all but the straw on which she lay, for his rent. I thought my heart had burst as I flung myself upon the ground by her side. A mist came over my eyes. I neither knew what I saw nor heard. I felt her cold arms clinging round my neck. She spoke—she told me *my father's name!* Comrade! it was the first time I had heard it! The word father pierced my heart like a dagger, and, in my agony, I knew not what she said. I started, I entreated her to repeat it again! But my mother was silent!—she was dead! —the arms of a corpse were fastened round my neck! With the breath which uttered the name she had not spoken for more than twenty years, her spirit fled—and I—I cannot remember it.'

"'Vast there, Bill!' cried Jack, wiping a tear from his eyes; 'that is tragedy enough without going to the play for it. But, for the sake of Mary Danvers, the prettiest girl on Tyneside (not even excepting my old woman), cheer up, my lad!'

"'If that should cheer me,' said he, 'I believe it is the principal cause why I am sad to-day.'

"'Why, then,' said Jack, 'don't you take an example by me, and run your frigate to church at once? You will find a plain gold ring is a precious fast anchor.'

"'But what,' replied Stanley, 'if the old commodore, her father, won't allow me to take her in tow?'

"'He won't!' cried Jenkins—that's a goodun! Old dad Danvers won't allow you to splice with her! What's his reason? I'm sure he can't say but you are as sober as the chief judge of the Admiralty.

"'To-night,' replied Stanley, in a tone of agitation, 'he found her in my company, and called, or rather dragged her away: and, as they went, I heard him upbraid her bitterly, and ask if the meanness of her spirit would permit her to throw herself away upon——upon'——William became more agitated, the words he had to utter seemed to stick in his throat; and his friend Jenkins exclaimed—'Upon a better man than ever he was in his life! But what did he say, Bill—*upon* what was she going to throw herself away?'

"'Upon a beggar's nameless *bastard!* he said,' groaned poor Stanley, striking his hand upon his brow.

"'What d'ye say?' cried Jenkins, clenching his fist; 'had the old fellow's ribs not been removed off the first letter, this hand had shivered them! Flesh and blood, Stanley, how did ye endure it?'

"'I started to my feet,' said he; 'my teeth grated together; but I heard her gentle voice reproving him for the word, and it fell upon my heart like the moon upon the sea, Jack, after a storm. My hand fell by my side. He is *her* father, thought I; and, for the first time in his life, Will Stanley brooked an affront.'

"Just as he was speaking, a gentle tap came to the door. 'Good night, Jack,' added he; 'I understand the signal, the old cruiser is off the coast, and now for the smuggling trade.'

"I may tell you that the reason why old Danvers was so averse to his daughter keeping company with Bill Stanley was, that there was a hypocritical middle-aged villain, called Squire Wates (the same that Bill spoke of as having sold off his mother, and left her to die upon straw), I hate the

very name of the old rascal! Well, you see, this same Squire Wates that I am telling you of, came from abroad somewhere, and bought a vast deal of property about Shields. He was said to be as rich as an Exchange Jew—and perhaps he was. He had cast an eye upon Mary Danvers, and the grey-haired rascal sought, through the agency of his paltry yellow dross, to accomplish the destruction of the innocent and beautiful creature; and thinking that Will Stanley was an obstacle to the accomplishment of his purpose, he determined to have him removed. He also persuaded old Danvers that he wished to make his daughter his wife. Conscience!—after half drowning such a hoary-headed knave, I would have hung him up at a yard-arm, without judge or jury, and buried him in a dunghill without benefit of clergy. He employed a fellow of the name of Villars as a confederate in his base intentions—one who had been thrice a bankrupt, without being able to show a loss that he had sustained, or pay a shilling to his creditors. This creature he professed to set up in business—in something connected with the West India trade—and he prevailed on landlord Danvers to embark in the speculation, and to risk all that he had saved in the *Old Ship* for five-and-twenty years. So that the firm—if such a disgraceful transaction might be called by that appellation—went by the designation of *Villars & Danvers.* The firm, however, was altogether an invention of Wates, to promote his designs. There was another whom they engaged in their scheme—a fellow who was a disgrace to the sea—the very spawn of salt water—a Boatswain Rigby; and the frigate to which he belonged was cruising upon the coast for the protection of the coasters. But you will hear more about these worthies by-and-by.

"It was within a few hours of the time, when, as I told you before, Bill Stanley and Jack Jenkins were to sail upon a twelvemonth's voyage. The vessel to which they

belonged was lying out in the harbour below Tynemouth Castle, and sweethearts and wives were accompanying the crew to the beach, where a boat was waiting to take them aboard.

"Mary had ventured to accompany William part of the way towards the beach to bid him adieu; and when, through fear of her father finding them together, she would have returned, he held her hand more firmly within his, and said—'Fear nothing, love; it is the last time we shall see each other for twelve months. Come down as far as the boat; and do not let it be said, when it pulls off, that Bill Stanley was the only soul in the ship's crew, that had not a living creature on the shore to wave *good-by* to—or one to drop a tear for his departure, more than if he were a dog. If I be alone and an outcast in the world, do not let me feel it now.'

"'Willingly,' she replied, 'would I follow you, not only there, but to the ends of the earth. But my father will be on the beach, watching the boat; or, if he be not, the spies of another will be there, and my accompanying you would only make my persecution the greater during your absence.'

"'What!' exclaimed he, 'have I then a rival for your affections, one that I know not of, and whose addresses are backed by your father's influence? Who is he?—or what is his name? Tell me, Mary—I conjure you, by your plighted faith.'

"'Give not the name of a rival,' said she, 'to a hypocritical wretch, whose heart I would not tread beneath my heel, for fear of pollution! A rival!—William, I would not insult the meanest reptile that feeds upon garbage, by placing it in competition with a hypocrite so base and mean! A rival!—rather would I breathe the vapours of a ploughed charnel-house for ever, than be blasted with his breath for a single hour! No—my heart is yours—it is wholly yours—fear not.'

"'Mary,' said he, solemnly, 'if I am worthy of your love, I am not unworthy of your confidence. You would not, you could not, bestow such language on the most worthless, where personal indignity had not been offered, or intended you. Name him, I adjure—nay, I *command* you,' he added wildly; 'it will yet be three hours till the vessel sail, and in that period I will avenge the indignity that has been offered to you.'

"'Speak not of such a thing,' said she; 'whatever be his designs, against such a persecutor she is a weak woman who cannot defend herself. Would you raise your hand against a worm, or draw a sword against a venomous fly? Come, think not of it—look not so; would a vessel of the line throw a broadside into a paltry cock-boat? Punish him!—no, despise him!'

"'It may be so,' he rejoined; 'but my heart is to yours as the eyelid is to the eyeball, and even a moth between them causes agony. Name him, that I may judge of his power to do evil, or the vessel which is this day to sail—sails without me.'

"'Then, that your contempt may equal mine,' added she, 'think of the creature *Wates!* He whose name stands first on the list of *published* charities—and who sends the newsman abroad to trumpet his piety, while villany lurks in his grey hairs.'

"'What!' he exclaimed wildly—*Wates!* the murderer of my mother!—who sent his minions to sell the very bed from beneath her, and left her to perish on the ground! Justice! where sleep thy thunderbolts! Mary, we shall return—I go not to sea to-day!'

"'William,' said she affectionately, 'do you then fear to trust me? Did he carry honours in his right hand, and in his left the wealth of the world, and lay them both at my feet—I feel that within me that would spurn them from me, as I would an insect that crawled upon me to sting me.

To you would I give my hand and beg for a subsistence, rather than share with him the throne of an empire. What then do you fear? In your own words, if I am unworthy of your confidence, I am unworthy of your love.'

"'No, Mary!' he cried, 'it is not fear. Wrong not yourself, neither wrong my bosom, that is full to bursting, by harbouring such a thought. When darkness issues from the sunbeams, I will doubt your affection; when a whirlwind sweeps across the sea, and the billows rise not at its voice, I will fear your truth—not till then. But I know that to associate the name of the most virtuous woman with that of a villain, is to make the world suspect her. Ah, Mary! in the innocence of your own heart you suspect not the iniquity of which some are capable. Let the name of a libertine be attached to the character of a man, and especially of a rich man, till his crimes are heaped up like a world of sin upon the shoulders of their contemptible author, and the next sun that rises, in the eyes of the world melts away their enormity, if not their remembrance; but, if the mere shadow of such a villain's breath pass over the character of a woman, its stains will remain fixed and immoveable, growing in blackness and gathering misery, until life and memory have made their last port. I will not speak of revenge, to distress you—but I shall not undertake this voyage. I will remain on shore, not to guard your innocence, but to protect your name from slander.'

"'William,' she answered, 'ignorant of the world I may be; but I know that your remaining on shore would only give rise to the calumnies which you would wish to prevent. You would make yourself an object for the laughter and remarks of your shipmates; and would disoblige your owners, who, after this voyage, have promised you the command of a vessel. And for what would you do this, but through fear of a wretch on whom I could not waste

a single thought, and on whom I regret that I have thrown away a single word.'

"At that moment Jack Jenkins, with his wife Betty, weeping like a mermaid under his arm, hove in sight, and the moment he beheld his comrade, he called out—'Hollo, Bill! how did you and Polly manage to pass the old Commodore of *the Ship;* I saw him keeping a look-out abaft there.' But his wife sobbed while he was speaking, and, as he approached his shipmate, he continued—'Take aback in time, Bill, and don't marry—I ask your pardon, Polly, and yours too, Betty, my love,' kissing his wife's cheeks; 'I don't exactly mean not to marry, either—but this parting company breaks up one's heart, like an old fir-built craft that is not fit for fire-wood. I wish the lubber's back had a round dozen that invented the word—*good-by!* It always sticks in my throat, like pushing a piece of old junk down it.'

"While he was speaking, a king's cutter shot round a point of land, with a pack of lobsters abaft; and the black fellow, Boatswain Rigby, sat in her bow. She was within twenty yards of where they stood.

"'Fly, William!—fly!' said Mary, wildly; 'it is you they seek—my heart tells me it is you—oh, fly!'

"'Be not afraid, dearest,' said Stanley; 'I do not think they mean harm to us, and, if they did, flight is impossible.'

"'Oh, run! run!' cried Betty Jenkins; 'see—the marines are handling their muskets.'

"'Run! why, it's of no use running,' said her husband; 'the lobsters would bring a fellow up with their pepper-boxes before he could run a quarter of a cable's length.'

"The boat took the ground, and Rigby, with a party of sailors and marines, sprang on shore.

"'Well, my hearties,' said the boatswain, 'will either of you volunteer to serve his Majesty?'

"'Why, sir'——Jack Jenkins was replying, when his

wife placed her hand upon his mouth, saying—'Are you a fool, Jack?'

"'What!' said the boatswain, 'no volunteers! Well, we want but one of you. This is our man,' and he touched Stanley on the shoulder with his cutlass.

"'Oh!' cried Mary, addressing the boatswain, as she fell upon William's neck; 'spare him! spare him! and with my last coin I will endeavour to procure a substitute in his stead.'

"'It won't do, my pretty maiden,' said Rigby; 'in these times we can't lose so promising a prize, for a woman's tears. Marines, to the boat with him.'

"'Hold! servile slaves!' cried Stanley, as they attempted to drag him away; 'allow me to bid adieu to my Mary, and to my friends here, or I defy the worst you can do.'

"'Quick, then,' said Rigby, 'the service cannot wait for farewells.'

"Mary still clung to William's arm. 'Good-by, Jack,' said he, with the salt water rolling in his eyes, and his heart ready to burst—'and when you return from the voyage, see that you keep the land-sharks off my poor Mary, for the sake of your old messmate.'

"'Belay, Bill!' cried Jenkins; 'my heart's afloat. Heaven bless you, lad, and be at ease respecting Polly. Should any lubber pull alongside, my name's not Jenkins if I don't force him to strike his colours, and shove off with broken timbers. Good-by, Bill—give me your hand; and though they were my last words, I say—I'm blowed if ever I shook the flipper of a better fellow!'

"Mary!' sobbed he, pressing her to his heart; 'farewell, love!—we shall meet again!—you won't forget Bill Stanley!'

"'Stay! oh, stay!' she exclaimed. But the boatswain waved his hand impatiently, and his crew rudely tearing

them asunder, William Stanley was dragged to the boat, and borne on board the frigate.

"Well, twelve months passed, after the impressment of William Stanley, and Squire Wates found that his wealth offered no temptation to Mary Danvers, to enable him to effect her ruin. He, however, had inveigled her father into his meshes; and, through the pretended failure of the mercantile speculation in which Villars and old Danvers had been engaged, the former brought a claim of five hundred pounds against the latter, who had lost his all. And the plan of the villains was, that Villars should cast the old man into prison, and that Wates should come forward, and professing to pay the debt, set the father at liberty, and obtain, through the daughter's gratitude, what her virtue spurned. To ensure success to this master-stroke of their wickedness, it was to be attended by a mock-marriage, in which Boatswain Rigby (the frigate to which he belonged being again lying off Tynemouth), was, for a *consideration*, to officiate as chaplain.

"It was on the very day that this piece of iniquity was hatched, that Jack Jenkins, having returned—and having learned from his wife, and from Mary Danvers, of some of the attempts that had been made by Squire Wates, during his absence, and since the impressment of his comrade—hurried to the house of the old rascal, with a rope's end in his hand. He found the street door open, and, without knocking, he went to the foot of the stairs, and demanded to see Squire Wates.

"'You can't see him, fellow,' said a portly, pampered man-servant.

"'Can't see him!' roared Jack; 'he shall see me presently, and feel me too. So, come along, Mr. Powdered-pate; shew me where he is, or I'll capsize you head and heels.'

"The old villain, himself, hearing the uproar, came blustering out of a room, crying—'Who are you, fellow?

and how dare you, in such a manner, break into my house? What is your business with me?'

"'Vast there with your questions, old leprous-livered knave!' vociferated Jenkins. 'As to who I am, I am a better fellow than ever stood in your shoes; and, as to daring to break into your house, before I leave it, I shall dare to break your head! And as to my business with you, I intend to make you *sensible* of that too;' and as he uttered the word *sensible*, he shook the piece of rope in his hand, and continued—'Now, I have answered your questions; answer one to me. Do you remember a lad of the name of Bill Stanley—eh?'

"The Squire shook with terror; but endeavouring to assume an air of authority, stammered out—'No—no—fellow; I—I know no such person. Begone, sir. Be—begone, I say.'

"'Smash me if I do!' added Jenkins. 'And belike you don't know Polly Danvers, either? Well, perhaps this piece of old junk may sharpen your memory!'

"Wates called upon his servants for assistance.

"'Hands off, ye beggarly swabs! or kiss the boatswain's sister!' continued the sailor, laying lustily around him, and causing the domestics to shrink back. 'Vast there!' he continued, laying hold of the squire, who attempted to escape; 'not so fast—I an't quite done with you yet. Now, you see, I'm an old friend and shipmate of Bill Stanley's; and the day that he was pressed, and you were the cause of it, Bill says to me—'Jack,' says he, 'when I am away, see that no land-shark comes alongside my Polly.' 'Fear nothing, Bill,' says I, 'hang me if I don't—there's my hand on't.' Now, I've been at sea ever since, until the other day, and my old woman tells me that you, you cream-faced scoundrel, not only had the impudence to pull alongside Polly Danvers, but had the audacity to propose——shiver me if I can name it—but take that!'

"And so saying, he began to lay the rope fiercely round the shoulders of his victim; and, as the servants again closed upon the sailor to rescue their master, he dashed them to the ground, to the right and to the left, and finally rushed out of the house, crying—'Who shall say that Jack is the lad that would break his promise?'

"I told you it was a part of the plot of Wates, that his confederate Villars, was to cast old Danvers into prison, on account of the pretended debt. The old landlord was sitting in the parlour of the *Old Ship*, trembling at the horrors of a jail, and fearing every moment the entrance of a sheriff's officer to arrest him, while his wife and daughter endeavoured to comfort him, and he said mournfully—'Wife, after being married thirty years as we have been, I did not expect that we should have been parted in this way. I did not think that, after toiling in the *Old Ship* here for twenty years, to save a matter of money for our daughter, I should lose all, and my hair grow white in a prison. But it is of no use mourning about it; for I question if those for whom we wished the money would have thanked us. I know I would not have seen a father or mother of mine dragged to jail like a common thief, if I by any means could have prevented it.' And, as he spoke, he cast a look of sorrow and upbraiding upon Mary, who wept on her mother's shoulder.

"'Don't be cruel, husband,' said his wife; 'how can you distress our daughter? I am sure she can't help the state we are reduced to, any more than I can. But I always said what all your jobbing and trafficking in company with the bankrupt Villars, would end in. I know thou'rt suffering enough, and we are all suffering; but don't be reflecting upon our dear Mary, for a better child never parents had.'

"'I an't making reflections,' replied he, peevishly; 'only I'm saying, I would not have stood so by my father. It is

no reflection to say that Mary might have been a lady, and then I am sure I should not have been dragged from the parlour—where I have sat for twenty years—to a dungeon in a jail.'

"'Father!' said Mary, 'what would you have me do? Would you have me become an object for the virtuous to shun, for your enemies to triumph over and despise, and for the abandoned to insult? Would you have me to sell my purity, my peace of mind, my present and eternal happiness, to a miscreant who carries sanctity on his brow, and morality between his teeth, while his heart is a putrid sepulchre? Would you have me do this to save you from a prison?—and to which you have been brought by your own simplicity. To assist you, I will become the servant of servants—I would brush the dust from the shoes of strangers, in this house where I was born. But, while the tear blanches my cheeks for your misfortunes, cause them not to burn with shame.'

"'Why, daughter,' replied he, angrily, 'I don't understand thy high words at all. But though I don't know so much of my dictionary as thou dost, I know those books you read have turned thy head with foolish and high notions. I know you wont have Mr. Wates, because he is a thought oldish, and belike doesn't make love like one of the romance sparks you read about. But, I say, I'm neither blind nor deaf, and, for all that you have said, I know as how it is marriage, and nought else, that Mr. Wates intends. But, rich as he is, you won't have him, but will see your poor old father dragged through the streets, like a thief to a prison. O Mary! it is a sore thing to have an ungrateful child!'

"'O husband!—husband!' said Mrs. Danvers; 'they were thy high notions, and none of our dear daughter's, that has brought us to this. But it is not my part to add to thy sorrows, when thou art about to be torn from my

side. Alack! I never thought to be made a widow in this sort.'

"'Wife!—wife!' cried he impatiently; 'be it my blame, or whose blame it may, we can't make a better of it now; but it is very hard to have lost the earnings of twenty years, and to be parted from wife and child. Don't be angry with me, daughter. Your father meant all he has said or done for your good. Come, give your old father a kiss and forgive him. It may be the last he will ever receive from you in his own house.'

"She threw her arms around his neck and wept; and while the father and daughter embraced each other, a sheriff's officer entered the house.

"'Well-a-day!—well-a-day!' cried Mrs. Danvers, as she perceived him; 'thy errand, and the disgrace of it, will break my heart.'

"'Don't be distressed, good woman,' said the officer, 'it is no such disgrace but that many of the best in the country must submit to it every day. Mr. Danvers,' added he, 'I am sorry to inform you, you must walk with me. This paper will inform you, you are my prisoner.'

"'It is very hard,' said the old man; 'I say, sir, it is very hard to be called a prisoner in a free country, for doing nothing at all. Heaven knows about this here debt that is brought against me, for I don't. But I know that locking me up in a jail won't pay it.'

"'Oh, cruel law!' exclaimed Mary; 'framed by fools, and put in force by usurers. Let justice laugh at the wise law makers, who shut up the springs, and expect the reservoirs to be filled.'

"'Why, miss,' said the official, 'I didn't make the law; I be only the officer of the law. So come along, Mr. Danvers, my good man, for I can't stop all day to hear your daughter's speeches. I have other jobs of the same sort in hand, and business must be attended to.'

"'Go, unfeeling man,' answered Mary, 'we will go with you. Bear with misfortune, my dear father, like a man. I will accompany you—take my arm. If I have hung upon yours with pride, upon more joyful occasions, it shall not be said that I was ashamed for you to rest upon mine, when they led you through the streets to a prison.' And she accompanied him to the place of confinement.

"It was two days after old Danvers had been taken to prison, that the frigate into which William Stanley had been impressed made towards the land, and rode off the mouth of the Tyne, while a boat's crew were ordered on shore. Boatswain Rigby, apprehensive that William would request to be one of them, and that his request might be granted, had, previous to the boat leaving the vessel, sought to quarrel with him, and struck him; and requested of the lieutenant that, in consequence of the insolence he had used towards him, he should not be permitted to go on shore, but, as a punishment, placed on duty.

"Poor Stanley was walking the deck, saying unto himself—'Refused permission to go ashore! Yes, Rigby! petty tyrant as thou art, thou shalt rue it! Refused a privilege that would have caused a slave to rebel, had he been denied it. But the time will come, when we shall meet upon terms of equality; and were his cowardice equal to his brutality—yea, were he shielded by a breast-plate hard as his own heart—my revenge shall find a passage through both; and his blood shall wash out the impression and the shame of the blow with which to-day he dared to smite me as a dog. The remembrance of that blow sticks as a dagger in my throat—its remembrance chokes me!' And, hurried on by the agitation of his feelings, he spoke aloud as he continued. "Not only denied to set my foot upon the place of my nativity, but struck!—yes, struck like a hound, by a creature I despise! O memory!' he added, 'torture me not! Here, every remembered object strikes

painfully on my eyeballs! The church and the churchyard, where my mother's body now mingles with the dust, are now before me, and I am prohibited from shedding a tear upon her grave. The banks of the Tyne, where I wandered with my Mary, while it sighed affection by our side, and the blue sea, which lay behind us, raising a song of love, are now visible—but though they are still beautiful, they are as beautiful things that lived and were loved, but that are now dead!'

"In the intensity of his feelings he perceived not a boat which drew alongside; and, while he yet stood in a reverie, his old crony, Jack Jenkins, sprang on board, and, assisted by a waterman, raised Mary Danvers to the deck.

"'Yonder he is,' exclaimed Jack, 'leaning over the gunwale, as melancholy as a merman making his last will and testament in the presence of his father Neptune.'

"Stanley started round at the voice of his friend; he beheld his betrothed wife; for you know they were the same as betrothed—they had vowed to be true to each other, and, I believe, broken a ring betwixt them.

"'My own Mary!' he cried, and sprang forward to meet her. The poor things fell upon each other's neck, and wept like children.

"'Shove me your fist, my hearty,' cried Jenkins, 'as soon as you have done there. I thought I would give you a bit of an agreeable surprise.'

"'There, Jack!—there, my honest old friend!' cried Bill, stretching out his one hand, and with the other supporting his sweetheart. 'My head and heart are scudding beneath a sudden tempest of joy! Speak, Mary, love! let me again hear your voice thrilling like music through my breast! O Jack! I am now like one who has been run down in a squall at midnight, and ere he is aware that the waters have covered over him, finds himself aloft, listening to the harps of the happy.'

"'I don't know what this is like, Bill,' said the other; 'but it an't like those meetings we used to have.'

"'Why so silent, love,' said William, addressing Mary; 'in another hour I shall be off duty, and in one day of happiness let us forget the past.'

"'Dear William,' she replied, 'I know not what I should say, nor what I should conceal. I have so little of joy to communicate, that I would not embitter the pleasure of the present short hour, by a recital of the events that have occurred during your absence.'

"'Hide nothing from me, Mary,' said he earnestly; 'but tell me, have my forebodings, regarding the monster Wates, been but too true? Or are your parents—— You tremble love—you are pale! O Jenkins, speak!—tell me what is the meaning of this?'

"'Drop it, Bill, my dear fellow,' said the other, 'drop it. You have got Polly alongside of you there, with a heart as sound and true to you as when you left her; and don't distress her with questions; she didn't come aboard for that. I served out the old fellow Wates, as you requested me, with a rope's end, t'other night, and that pretty smartly too. And, with regard to father Danvers, why, poor soul, somehow or other, misfortune has got the weather-gage of him, and the other day he was taken to jail. So, say no more about it, Bill—we can't mend it.'

"'Why,' he exclaimed, stamping his foot as he spoke, 'why am I a slave? And who, my beloved Mary—who now shall protect you? But I can still do something. I have a bank bill for a hundred pounds, the savings of former voyages. I know not why I took it out of my locker this morning. I had it carefully placed away with the ringlet which I cut from your brow, dearest. Here are both; I will keep the ringlet, and think it dearer than ever; take you the note, my love; it may be of service to your father.'

"'No, no, William,' she cried, 'I must not, I cannot! Dearest, most generous of men, do not *pity* me, or I shall wither in your sight. Look on me as you were wont. But, oh! let me not stand before you as a beggar. Keep it—as you love me, keep it—make me not ashamed to look in your face.'

"'Then take it, Jack, take it,' said Stanley, handing him the note; 'do with it as I desire. Say nothing more now; for here comes our Boatswain Rigby, the curse of our ship's crew, and the disgrace of the service.'

"Mary shuddered as Rigby approached them; and boisterously said—'Who have you got there, fellow, and you upon duty? I shall report you instantly. Some of your old friends, and meditating an escape with them, I see.' And, turning to Jenkins, he added—'Who, sir, gave you permission to come on board this vessel, and to bring *a woman of that description* along with you? Off, instantly, or I shall detain you too. You, girl, must remain;' and he approached her familiarly to take her by the arm. Stanley sprang forward, exclaiming—'Hold, sir, hold! You have insulted her by your words; but touch not, as you would remain a living man, the hem of her garment.'

"'Begone to your duty, presumptuous slave!' cried the boatswain fiercely; 'begone!' And as he spoke, he raised his hand, and struck him on the breast.

"'Again!—ha!—ha!—ha!' exclaimed William, like a demon laughing through excess of torture; 'twice you have struck me, Rigby, to-day!—struck me in the presence of her who is dearer to me than life! Now, heaven have mercy on thee!' And, seizing the boatswain by the breast, he hurled him violently on the deck, and planted his foot upon his bosom.

"'William!—dear William!' cried Mary; 'forbear!—forbear!'

"'Bill, Bill, my dear fellow!' cried Jack, 'don't lose your life for the sake of a ruffian.'

"William continued standing with his foot upon his breast, laughing in the same wild and fearful manner, and shouting—'struck me!' while Rigby called for help. A number of the ship's crew sprang forward to the rescue of the boatswain, who, rising, cried—'The irons instantly! Set a double watch over him! He has attempted, as ye have witnessed, the life of an officer, and his first promotion shall be the yard-arm.'

"While they were placing the irons upon him, Mary threw herself at Rigby's feet, exclaiming—'Oh, spare him! —save the life of my William!—by her that bore you, or that loves you, save him!—save him!'

"'Rise, Mary!' cried William, 'that our farewell glance be not one of reproach. Pray for vengeance on my enemy! Farewell, Jack—for ever this time! See my Mary safe!' And, as they were bearing him away, he turned his head towards her, and cried—'Dearest, we shall meet hereafter, where the villain and the tyrant cannot enter.'

"She fell insensible on the deck, and, in a state of unconsciousness, was conveyed on shore by Jenkins.

"The frigate was commanded by Captain Sherbourne, and, when the officers were assembled to hold a court-martial over poor Stanley, he said, addressing Rigby—'There is not a man in the British navy, Boatswain Rigby, more determined than myself to preserve order and discipline; but while, as captain of this vessel, I am compelled to enforce the law, I am no advocate for the inhuman and degrading lash; nor can I, with indifference, sentence a brave fellow to be hung up for doing that which the best feelings of his nature, and the sentiments that make a hero, prompted him to do. I sit here as a judge, and am neither advocate for the prisoner, nor your accuser; but, if the law must be satisfied, the offence, wherever it is found,

shall be punished, whether in the accused or the accuser. For it has not escaped my observation, that no officer under me has ever found a fault in the prisoner, save yourself. Are you then resolved and prepared to prosecute your charge?'

"'I am both resolved and prepared, Captain Sherbourne,' said Rigby; 'and I demand the satisfaction of the laws of my country and the service, not only as an officer who has been insulted and injured, but as a British officer and subject, whose life has been attempted.'

"'This is a serious charge, boatswain,' said Captain Sherbourne; 'let the prisoner be brought forward.'

"The culprit was brought up, guarded, and in fetters, and, being placed before his judges—'Prisoner,' began the captain, 'I deeply regret that one of your appearance, and of your uniform excellent conduct and courage, while under my command, should be brought before me under such circumstances as those in which you now stand; and I regret the more that, if the charges be proved, the proofs of your former character and courage, which are known to us, will be of no avail. You are charged not only with striking your commanding officer, which is in itself a heinous offence, but also with attempting his life. Do you plead guilty or not guilty?'

"'That,' replied the prisoner, 'is as your honours please to interpret the deed. But there is no such charge reckoned against me in the log-book aloft.'

"'You then plead not guilty,' said the captain.

"'I am guilty,' answered he, 'of having acted as it was the duty of a man to act. I am guilty of having convinced a villain, that a proud heart may be found beneath a plain blue jacket. I am guilty of having proved that there are souls and feelings before the mast, as high-minded and as keen as upon the quarter-deck. But 'the head and front of my offending hath this extent, no more.''

"'He speaks bravely,' muttered some of those who heard him; 'the chaplain himself couldn't have said it so well by half.'

"'Boatswain,' said the captain, in the hearing of the prisoner, 'state the particulars of your charge against him.'

"'While it was his turn on duty,' said Rigby, 'I found him neglecting it, and plotting his escape from the frigate, in conversation with a suspicious-looking man, and a girl of common fame'——

"'Tis false!—despicable recreant!—'tis false!' interrupted William, wildly; 'she is spotless as the fountains of light! Breathe again dishonour on her name, and these chains that bind me shall hurl you, with the falsehood blistering on your tongue, down to'——

"'Silence, young man!' interposed the captain, 'I command you. If you have cause of complaint you will afterwards be heard. You may be mistaken, Mr. Rigby, regarding the character of the young woman, and you will not better your cause in our eyes, by unnecessarily blackening the prisoner's.'

"'Captain Sherbourne,' inquired the boatswain, in an offended tone, 'do you question my honour?'

"'I permit no such interruptions, sir,' said the captain; 'we sit here to deal with facts, not with honour. Go on with your charge.'

"'When,' resumed Rigby, 'I overheard him plotting his escape from the service, and commanded him to his duty, he haughtily rebelled; and, on my ordering the strangers on shore, he sprang forward, and dashing me on the deck, stamped his foot upon my breast, threatening and attempting to murder me, as these witnesses will prove.'

"'Stand forward, my good fellows,' said Captain Sherbourne, addressing two of the seamen, who had been witnesses of the assault, and assisted in rescuing the boatswain.

'Give your evidence truly. What do you know of this affair?'

"'Why your honour,' said the first seaman, 'just that the boatswain was lying upon the deck, and that Bill there had his foot upon his breast.'

"Do you suppose,' inquired the Captain, 'he had a design upon his life?'

"Please your honour,' answered the seaman, 'I can't say; but you had better ask himself. If he had, he won't deny it; for I'll take my Bible oath that Bill, poor fellow, never hove the hatchet in his life—and I don't believe he would do it to save his life. I could always be as sure of what he said, as I am of our latitude when your honour's own hands works it out.'

"'Well,' inquired the Captain, addressing the other seaman, 'what evidence have you to offer?'

"'I don't know anything about evidence, your honours,' answered the seaman. 'The boatswain was lying on the deck, and poor Bill had his foot upon his breast sure enough, and was laughing in such a dismal way as made me think that he had gone maddish through ill-usage or something. For, poor fellow, he was never easily raised, and though brave as a lion, was harmless as a lamb—all the crew will swear that of him.'

"'Prisoner,' said the Captain, 'I am sorry that the evidence of these witnesses, who seem as sorry for your fate as I am, but too strongly confirm, at least a part of the charges against you. If you have anything to say in your defence, the court is inclined to hear you.'

"'I am neither insensible of, nor ungrateful for the kindness of my commander,' answered William; 'and for the sake of her and her only, of whom the boatswain dared to speak as one dishonoured, I do not hold life without its value. But I disdain to purchase it by the humiliation of vindicating myself farther from the accusations of a wretch

whom I despise. Let the law take its award. Death is preferable to being the servant of a slave.'

"'I know not,' whispered Captain Sherbourne to his first lieutenant, 'how my lips shall pronounce sentence of death on this brave young fellow. His heroic courage and his talents compel me to revere and love him—and there is something, I know not what, in his features, haunts me as a lost remembrance.' Then turning toward the prisoner he added—'Before the sentence of the court is passed, whatever requests you may wish to have performed, I will see them faithfully carried into effect.'

"'Thanks! thanks!' replied William; 'I have but little to offer in return for your goodness; but the same spirit that made me resent the indignity of my accuser, would, were my hands free, cause me to embrace your knees. I have but three requests to make. I wish my watch to be given to her who is dearest to me on earth—Mary Danvers; my quadrant and other matters to my friend Jenkins, who sails in the ship '*Enterprise*,' now lying in the river; and my last request is, that, with the ten guineas belonging to me, and now in the possession of the purser, a stone may be placed upon my mother's grave—which Mary Danvers will point out—with these words chiseled upon it—

TO THE MEMORY
OF THE
AMIABLE AND UNFORTUNATE
MATILDA STANLEY.
BY DESIRE OF HER UNFORTUNATE SON.

"'Matilda Stanley!' exclaimed Captain Sherbourne in a tone of agitation, 'was that the name of your mother?'

"'It was, your honour, replied William, 'and there were few such mothers.'

"'And your father!—your father!' repeated the Captain, with increased agitation; 'what knew you of him?'

"'Alas! nothing!' exclaimed the prisoner bitterly, and the tears gushed down his cheeks; 'but, oh, recal not to my memory in a moment like this—recal not my mother's ——No! no! my sainted mother!'

"'O conscience! conscience!' exclaimed the Captain, starting to his feet, and gasping in eagerness as he spoke. 'One question more—and your mother's father was a dissenting clergyman in the village of —— name!—name the place! on that depends your life, and my happiness or misery.'

"'In the village of —— in Westmoreland,' replied William; 'but he survived not his daughter's broken heart. You knew them, then? Oh, did you know my father?'

"'My son! my son! come to a father's heart,' exclaimed the Captain, springing forward and falling on his neck; '*I am your father!* Shade of my wronged Matilda! look on this!'

"'My father!' exclaimed William, 'have I found him! and in such an hour! But, if you loved my mother, wherefore'——

"Upbraid me not, my son,' interrupted the Captain, 'mingle not gall with my cup of joy. Your mother was my wife—my first, my only one. Circumstances forced me to exact a promise from her, that our marriage should be concealed until I dared to acknowledge it, and long captivity severed me from her; until, on my return, I could obtain no trace of either of you. How I have mourned for her, all who now stand beside me have been the daily witnesses. My son! my son!'

"'My father! O my father!' exclaimed William; 'but at this moment you are also my *judge*.'

"'No! no!' cried the Captain. 'Seamen, strike off the fetters from your commander's son. Rigby, at another tribunal I will be surety for the appearance of my son.'

"The fetters were struck off from William's hands and feet, and officers and men burst simultaneously into three times three, loud, long, and hearty cheers.

"The boatswain, fearing that a worse thing might come upon him, fell on his knees before the Captain, and made a full confession of his shameful intrigue with Squire Wates, and begged forgiveness, as his kidnapping of William had been the means of finding the commander his son. The rascal was forgiven, but dismissed the frigate.

"But I must return to poor Mary. She was sitting beside her father in the prison, when he addressed her saying—'Come, come, child, thou saidst thou wouldst sing and read to me, and is this thy singing—nothing but sighing and tears. I'm saying, is this thy promised singing, daughter?—but it is perhaps the fittest singing for a jail.'

"'Ah, father!' said Mary, 'you know I would not willingly add to your sorrows. But can you forbid me to weep for him, who, from childhood, has been to me as a brother—whom I have long regarded as a husband, and who, *for my sake*, must in a few hours die as the vilest criminal.'

"'Why, I'm saying, daughter,' said old Danvers, 'let's have no more about it. I'm as sorry for Bill Stanley as thou canst be for thy life. But I say, girl, they can expect no better who fly in the face of a father. I am sure we have distress enough of our own, if we would only think about it, without meddling with that of other people. Is it not bad enough that thy father is shut up here within these iron bars, and perhaps thou and thy mother will be driven to beg upon the streets, when thou mightest have been riding in thy carriage. I'm saying, is not this misery enough, without thy crying about what thou hast nothing to do with. Why, Mary, thou mayest be thankful thou an't his wife.'

"'Father! father!' she said, wringing her hands together,

'murmur not at our lot, nor upbraid me with sympathising in misery to which yours is mercy! What are the sufferings of want compared with what I now feel! To save him I could smile and be happy, though doomed to beg and kiss the foot that spurned me from them.'

"The sheriff's officer and Mrs. Danvers at this moment entered, and the latter rushed towards her husband, exclaiming—'O husband! husband! the worst is come at last! They have seized house and all!—and, Mary, thou and I are left without a house to cover us! Thou hast no home now, hinny! Your father is shut up in this filthy prison, and your mother never knew what misery was till now!'

"'Wife! wife!' cried old Danvers, 'what dost thou say?—seized the house, too!—and my wife and daughter driven to the street! O wife!—I say, I wish I had never been born! Mary! Mary, love! what wilt thou do now?'

"'Do not, my dear parents,' said Mary, 'repine at the hand of providence. He who clothes the lily, and feeds the fowls of the air, will not permit us to perish in the midst of Christians.'

"'Daughter! daughter!' cried her mother, 'thou little knowest what a hard-hearted and wicked world we live in! Humanity and honesty, and everything that is good, have gone out of it. The world was not so when I knew it first.'

"'Well! well!' cried old Danvers; 'if the world be as bad as you say it is, it is one comfort that I shall not be long in it; for I cannot live to know that my wife and child are beggars, and that I am a prisoner, starving in a jail.'

"At this moment, Wates entered the room, and addressing Mr. Danvers, said—'I have but this morning heard of your misfortunes, Mr. Danvers, and have not lost a moment in hastening to offer my assistance. To your daughter I now offer my *hand*, my fortune, and my heart; and let her

but say she will accept them, and this day ends your imprisonment.'

"'There! old woman!' exclaimed Mr. Danvers, in ecstasy, 'what dost thou and our daughter think of that? Did I not say that Mr. Wates meant marriage, and nothing else but marriage—and was not I right? Thou shalt have her, sir, with a father's blessing, and I will pray for thee the longest day I have to live. Fall on thy knees, mother Danvers—fall on thy knees, and thank the kind, good, generous gentleman. Daughter, why dost thou stand there and say nothing? Did I not always say thou wast born to be a lady?'

"'For the sake of human nature, Mr. Wates,' said Mary, 'I will suppose that your intentions are now honourable. I will believe that you mean kindly, that you are willing to assist my parents, and rescue them from their distress. But, could I even forget the past—could I forget that for many months you have sought my destruction, and have striven to make me become that which would have made me to be despised in my own eyes, and an outcast in those of others—if, sir, I could even forget these things, I could not give my hand to one whom my heart has been accustomed to detest. For your offered kindness I would thank you with tears, but I can only repay you with gratitude. If, however, your assistance to my parents is only to be procured through my consenting to your wishes, they must remain as they now are, until it shall please providence to send them a more disinterested deliverer. Betwixt us there is a gulf fixed that shall ever divide us—it is death and aversion—therefore think not of me.'

"'Daughter!' cried the old man wrathfully, 'hast thou taken leave of thy senses altogether?'

"'Come, Mary, love,' said her mother; 'now that poor William must be no more, and that Mr. Wates means honourably, be not obstinate—do not suffer your father to

die in a place like this, and your mother to beg upon the streets.'

"'Mother!' cried Mary, vehemently, 'with the last of my blood will I toil for your support; but speak not of that man to me. Keep, sir, your wealth for one to whom it may have attractions, and to whom you have never offered dishonour. I despise it, and I despise you; and this shallow and cruel artifice will avail you nothing.'

"'Consent,' said Wates, 'and to-night our hands shall be united.'

"'Wife! wife!' cried the old man, 'we will humble ourselves at her feet; belike she won't see her father and mother weeping, on their knees before her, and say to them—die!' And they knelt before her.

"'Rise! my parents!—rise!' she exclaimed; 'if ye would not have your daughter's blood upon your head. Monster!' she added, turning to Wates, 'can ye talk of marriage to me, when he to whom my heart and vows are given, if he be not already dead, must in a few hours die a death of shame!'

"'And will you not save him,' said Wates, eagerly.

"'Save him!—how? how?' she cried.

"'Consent to be mine, and within an hour I shall procure his pardon,' said he.

"'Villain! villain! would you deceive me with the snare of the devil?' she exclaimed.

"'I swear it,' he answered.

"'Save him! save him!' she exclaimed wildly; but again cried suddenly—'No, no!—wretch, ye mock me!'

"'Yes, he mocks you, Mary,' said Jack Jenkins, who had just entered. 'I could find in my heart to kick the old murderer through those iron gratings; for I know it is all through him that poor Bill must, before the sun go down, lose his life.'

"While Jack was speaking, the locks of the prison doors

were again heard creaking, and in rushed William, his father, and the officers of the frigate, and they dragged the rascal Rigby along with them.

"There was a cry of 'Mary!' 'William!' and a rush to meet each other. But the best scene was the confusion of Wates, when his brother knave exposed his villany; and Captain Sherbourne ordering them to begone, Jack Jenkins rushed after them, for the pleasure of kicking them down the prison stairs; but Bill, catching him by the arm, said—'Messmate, let me introduce you to *my father!*'

"'*Your father!*' exclaimed Mary; and it would have been hard to say which of the two was nearest fainting. They left the prison together, old Danvers and all; and Mary and Bill were soon spliced. They were the happiest couple alive. He rose to be post captain; and I hope to see him an admiral. So, gentlemen, that's an end to my yarn."

"But," inquired the company, "what became of Jack Jenkins?" "Why, I am Jack Jenkins," answered he; "sailing-master, with half-pay of five and sixpence a-day, besides two shillings as interest for prize-money—thanks to my old friend Bill."

THE SURGEON'S TALES.

THE CONSCIENCE-STRICKEN.

At a dark period of the world, not yet so far back, in point of time, as modern conceit would place it, many facts in philosophy constituted a mere page of fable in the estimation of those whose belief in witchcraft and other fanciful agencies was unbounded; but, in our enlightened times, things are so curiously reversed, that some of the real events of human life—the every-day workings of that wonderful organ, the human heart—are viewed sceptically, as delusion, deception, or invention, by those whose faith is pinned to the floating mantle of philosophy, though it cover the wildest theory that ever set fire to enthusiasm. The facts I have to relate in this chapter, though true, may, from their extraordinary nature, be apt to be classed among creations of the fancy; yet I would rather that their credibility were tested by the mind of the plain and argute man of the world, than by that of the philosopher, who with his head down in the well, kicks at inexplicable mysteries growing on its brink.

It is not my object to treat metaphysically any of those powers of the mind which, either in health or disease, exhibit, in certain states, many extraordinary phases. The struggling energies of conscience loaded with crime, have been witnessed by philosophers who have denied the existence of the moral sense as an original power; but of what avail is their scepticism, when they are bound to admit that this great sanction of God's law is incident to all mankind—having been found as vivid and strong in the

new-found islands of Polynesia, as it ever was in the Old World? It would be for the interest of mankind if those who call themselves its teachers, and dignify themselves with the name of investigators of truth, had looked more often at the workings of this extraordinary power—witnessed and described the agonies of the heart convulsed by its throes, heard and narrated the piercing cries and the flaming words that are wrung from the throat of him who is under its scorpion lash, felt and told the horrors of those sights and sounds—instead of inquiring whether it is connate or constructed by social and political institutions. Yet this, too, has been done, and well done; and it is not because the effects are unknown, or have been inadequately described, that I contribute the results of my experience on this interesting subject, but simply because I conceive they cannot be too well known, or too forcibly delineated, in a country where a struggling competition of interests and a fierce ambition are exerted hourly in attempting to still the voice of the monitor that so indefatigably and thanklessly whispers a better life.

About twelve o'clock on the night of the 15th of December, 18—, I was aroused by a loud knocking at my bedroom door—a mode of calling me to my patients different from that generally followed by my domestics; and, upon my requesting the servant to come in, he entered hurriedly, with some one behind him, who called out, in the dark, that Mr. T——, a retired undertaker, whom I had been in the habit of attending, had been shot by an assassin, but that life remained, and might eventually be preserved, by my speedy attendance. I dressed instantly, and accompanied the messenger—a nephew of the wounded man, called William B——, whom I recollected to have seen in his house, and in whom he had much confidence—to where my services were thus so urgently required. We had about a mile to walk—the residence being beyond the

town, in the midst of a small plantation of fir trees, and too well situated for the accomplishment of any felonious or murderous intention which the reputed riches of the proprietor might generate in the minds of ruffians. The night was pitch dark; our path was rendered more doubtful by a heavy fall of snow, which, having continued all day, had ceased about two hours before; and I was obliged to trust almost implicitly to my guide, whose familiarity with the road rendered it an easy task for him to get forward. As we hurried on in the darkness and silence which everywhere reigned, my companion informed me that the shot was directed against the victim through the window of his bedroom, while he was sitting warming his feet at the fire, previous to retiring to rest; and that, the individuals in the house having been roused, one had taken charge of the wounded man, others had gone in search of the perpetrator, and he, the narrator, had flown for me, in the hopes of yet saving the life of his guardian and benefactor.

On arriving at the skirts of the planting, we met some domestics with lights, and perceived that they were busy endeavouring to trace some well-marked footsteps impressed on the snow, and which, they said, they had been able to follow from the window where the shot was fired. I requested them to desist for a short time, as they seemed to be incurring the danger of defacing or so confusing the foot-prints, by the irregular and excited manner in which they were performing this important duty, that they could not be identified. They agreed to remain with the lights until I came to them, or sent some one more capable of conducting the investigation, and, in the meantime, I hurried on to the house, where a most appalling scene presented itself to my eyes. On the floor, which was literally swimming in blood, lay the body of Mr. T——, with two people —an old woman, the housekeeper, and a middle-aged per-

son, whom I understood afterwards to be another nephew of the wounded man, of the name of Walter T—— (the son of a brother, while my companion, the messenger, was the son of a sister)—bending over him, and endeavouring to stop a wound, made by a pistol bullet, near the region of the heart. The work of the assassin was not entirely finished: there was still a fluttering uncertain life in the body, which shewed itself rather by its struggles against the overpowering energies of death, than by any proper living action; a hemorrhage in the lungs, paralysing their vitality, and filling up the air cells, fought, inch by inch, the province of the breath, which forced, at intervals, its way, by a horrid crepitation, through the aperture in the side, while, as the wound was producing fresh supplies, it was not difficult to see how the contest would terminate. In the pangs of choking, the wretched man heaved himself about, and lifted his hands to his mouth in the vain effort to force an entry to that element so signally the food of life. The peculiar, and to us doctors, well-known barking noise of the *cynanche trachialis*, (or as the name implies, the strangling of a dog,) a few torsels of the body, and shivers extending from head to foot, preceded a sigh as deep as the relentless following blood in the lungs would permit; and, in a few moments, he expired.

Leaving the body to the charge of the housekeeper, I called Walter T—— to accompany me to where the individuals stood with the lights, with the view of tracing the foot-prints in the snow to the hiding place of the cool-murderer, who had committed apparently so gratuitous a crime. When we arrived at the spot, several other people had collected, among whom were some sheriff officers on their way to the scene of the murder, but who stopped to join in, or rather superintend this investigation. The foot-prints around the spot where the people had collected were too much mixed and confused to be capable of being traced

for some distance; but, further on, they were again discernible and traceable, and, at one place, the extraordinary appearance presented itself to one of the officers, of a well defined figure of a pistol imprinted on the snow, with the finger points of a hand applied to lifting it from the ground —suggesting to the mind of every one present the unavoidable conclusion that the murderer had dropped the instrument of his crime in the hurry of his retreat, and had snatched it up again as he continued his flight.

We proceeded onwards slowly, aided by several lights brought from the house; and, though the darkness of the night presented many difficulties to a successful search, we were still able to progress with certainty to the termination of the murderer's route. Whenever two distinct marks were traced, we felt no difficulty in identifying them, from the unusual circumstance of one of them bearing the impress of nail heads, and the other not, as if only one of the shoes worn by the culprit had undergone the coarse process of repair, in which, in Scotland, short nails with broad heads are often used. As we proceeded onwards, some one cried out that the prints led to the dwelling of Walter T——; a remark which seemed to be about being verified by that individual's house now reflecting from its dark walls the glare of the lights, while the footsteps were clearly verging towards the door. I looked round and stared full in the face of the man, as it was darkly revealed to me by the flickering tapers; and, though I could perceive no indications of terror, there were clearly discernible signs of confusion, which, however, might have been the consequence of innocence as well as of guilt.

In a few minutes, we traced the foot-prints to the very threshold of the door of Walter T——'s house; and, upon the instant, one of the sheriff officers laid hold of the suspected man, who looked wildly around him, as if he wished to escape from the grasp of justice, and at last appealed to

me if it was fair to blast the character of an individual by an apprehension on such slender evidence as the tracing of a foot-print among the snow from one house to another. I replied, that I thought the evidence very inadequate to authorize a confinement, and that, as to the mere detention, he could, by taking off his shoes, and allowing them to be compared with the foot-print, remove the suspicion, and be set at liberty. The man pointed significantly and triumphantly to the foot-prints he had that instant made, and had been making during the whole course of the investigation, and we saw at once that, although the size of the impression was nearly the same in both, there was no indication of nails in the prints of the shoes he wore; a fact he verified by instantly taking off and exhibiting them to the officers; who, after a minute inspection, admitted that the impressions we had been tracing could not have been formed by the shoes exhibited. This clearance was deemed sufficient by those present; but one of the officers suggested a search of the house, in which he remarked, very properly, the person might be secreted whose foot-prints we had been tracing; and the party immediately entered. There was no person within, nor could anything be seen to justify those suspicions that had been roused by the evidence afforded by the foot-prints in the snow; and the officers and party were about to retire, when some one pointed to a kind of garret, formed by planks or boards laid on some cross beams that extended between the two walls of the cottage, and quite sufficient to have contained a man. The officer accordingly mounted by means of a ladder; and he had scarcely got up, when he cried out, in a voice that made us all start, that he had succeeded in his search. I had no doubt that he had found there the concealed murderer; and the silence that ensued for a few minutes, as the officer rendered his discovery, whatever it was, available—coming in place, as it did, of an expected uproar,

struggle, or fight—imparted to the scene, at this moment, great mystery, which was, however, partly removed by the descent of the officer, holding in his hands a pistol and a pair of shoes.

The appearance of these articles, so strangely and providentially traced by their images in the snow, produced a great sensation, for no one doubted but that they were the very evidences we were in search of; and so indeed they turned out to be, for the foot-prints and the shoes completely agreed, and the impression of the pistol on the snow was upon examination, found to be clearly that of the one discovered. It was again referred to me whether sufficient evidence had not now been procured to authorize the apprehension of the suspected man, who still remained in the grasp of the officer; and I felt myself, for the first time of my life, dragged, by the force of circumstances, into an investigation neither suited to my feelings and habits, nor connected with my profession, for the discharge of one of the duties of which I had been called out of bed at that late hour of the night. Unwilling even with the evidence before me, to pass sentence against the man, I inquired of William B——, his cousin, who stood by me, what kind of character he bore; and ascertained from him that he was a person of idle habits, and had been in the practice, for many years, of living upon what money he could extort, by threats or entreaties, from the deceased, who had done much for him, and had never received even thanks for what he had done; that he had known them have many quarrels, and one in particular a short time before that night; and that the deceased had threatened, by making a will, to deprive the ungrateful nephew (his heir) of any part of his effects —a step now prevented by his violent death, which would put the latter, if not guilty of this great crime, in possession of his property, which was very considerable. These corroborating circumstances bore heavy upon me; yet, such is

force of habit, I would have felt less pain in amputating one of the suspected man's limbs, than I experienced (and, though it is twenty years since that night, I have the recollection of the painful feeling still) in giving my required sanction to a commitment that might be the first step in a progress to the scaffold. During the few moments of deliberation that passed, before I could bring my mind to pronounce my verdict, the unfortunate man sought, with a fearful eye, my countenance. A shaking terror, that chased every drop of blood from his face, and struck his limbs with the feebleness of a child, was exposed by the lights that flared at intervals on his person; and every one read in these indications of fear, the evidences of his guilt. My opinion was delivered in accordance with that of the other persons assembled. The agitation of the culprit rose to such a degree, that he fell upon the ground, and, grasping my limbs with the convulsive clutch of despair, screamed for mercy, till the echoes rung through the planting, and came back upon the ears of the relentless abettors of justice. The more eager were his energetic appeals to feelings that were steeled against the cries and sobs of a murderer, the more determined were the people to do their duty to the injured laws of their country; and as he, on relinquishing the grasp of my knees, was extended on the ground, laying about him, and casting up the snow, which he clutched with his hands, and even bit in his agony, he was again laid hold of by the officers, assisted by the people, and carried struggling to the nearest place where a cart could be procured to drive him to jail.

Next day I was examined by the law officers, and stated the facts I had witnessed, as I have now related them from my notes. Many others were examined, and, among the rest, William B——, and the housekeeper I had seen hanging over the body of Mr. T——; the latter of whom, I understood, gave testimony to the effect that she had, some

days before the murder, heard her master accuse the pannel of having stolen from him his watch; and an officer who had searched the house, and found the watch in a place not far from that where the shoes and pistol had been found, produced it to the men of the law, while the housekeeper and William B—— identified it as the deceased's property. Some days afterwards, a great advance was made in the evidence by another discovery, to the effect that the pannel had been in the practice of stating, to various people to whom he owed money, that he would pay them, with compound interest, when his old uncle (the deceased) was dead, as he, in the character of heir-at-law, would succeed to all his property; and, on one occasion, he had, in some drunken orgies, proceeded so far as to propose as a toast, in presence of his cousin, William B——, who spoke to the fact, a quick and safe passage to the soul of his uncle over the Stygean stream, which, to him, the heir, would become a rich in gold as Pactolus. A great number of other corroborative facts and circumstances were spoken to by many witnesses, which, at this distance of time, I cannot recollect: the evidence was, on the whole, deemed by the men of the law sufficient to justify a trial, which accordingly took place some time afterwards, and at which I was examined as a principal witness.

The scene of that day was, in an eminent degree, heart-rending; the facts proved seemed to strike the unfortunate man like thunderbolts, driving him into a state of stupor from which he was no sooner roused than he was again stricken with the same paralysing proof of his crime. The hand of the Almighty appeared to be occupied in tracing, before the averted eyes of the murderer, the secret purpose he had devised in the recesses of his heart, far removed, as he thought, from mortal eye, yet now revealed as evidence to consign him to the death he was unprepared to meet; and, as he prayed, ejaculated, wept, and swooned by turns,

the people assembled in court, while they could not doubt his crime, or conceal from themselves its enormity, pitied the victim of such agony of torture as he was apparentl suffering, only, too, on the very threshold of his misery.

Having remained in court after my examination, I was called upon by the judge, on more occasions than one, to administer what relief was in my power to the unhappy being, as he lay apparently senseless under the bolt of some truth that came on him from the witness-box, as if to seal his doom in this world. I could do little for him, when he was struck by these moral impulses, except by administering stimulants; but, on one occasion, he lay so long under an attack of syncope, that I felt myself called upon to have him removed, for a short time, to an ante-room, where I took from him some ounces of blood. I have watched the eyes of patients brought back to sensibility, life, and hope, and seen the ray of the brightening prospect of health, success, and happiness, dawn on the drowsy orb; but I had not before witnessed the return of sense and intelligence to be directed, at the first glance, on a gallows, and I shuddered as I perceived the breaking in on his clouded mind of the consciousness of the situation in which he was placed —the terror of again facing that court, and that damning evidence, and the recoiling effort he made to escape—alas, how vain!—from the grasp of the officers, as they again proceeded to carry him to the court-room. When placed again at the bar, upheld by the officers, pale and trembling, the relentless forms of justice proceeded; the witnesses resumed the chain of evidence, and the unfortunate man was again subjected to the rack, under the torture of which his weakened body recoiled with feebler efforts, as exhausted nature denied the supply of the sensibility of pain. But the charge of the judge, which was hollow against the prisoner, ingenious in its reasonings and stern in its conclusions, again revived the slumbering agonies;

and the return of the verdict "Guilty" by the jury, was the signal for the commencement of a scene which the hardest hearted person in the court could not witness without horror. A shrill scream ran through the court-room, and was followed by the extraordinary sight of the prisoner clambering over the bar, clutching the clerks' seat, and struggling, against the grasp of the officers, to get forward to the bench, on which the judge sat adjusting the black cap with a view to pronounce the sentence of death. The roused judge vociferated to the officers, blaming them for their remissness; but his voice was overcome by the ejaculations of the prisoner, who cried for mercy, till, vanquished by the men, who held him firmly down, and even stopped his mouth, he fell senseless within the bar, deaf to the words of the fatal sentence, which now, in the midst of death-like silence, rolled over the court with a solemnity never perhaps witnessed in any place of justice before or since.

On being carried to the jail, whither I accompanied him at the request of the judge, he was with difficulty brought back to a state of consciousness; but it was only to be able to fill the prison with his unavailing cries. I could do him no good; and, though used to exhibitions of pain and misery, I was unable to witness longer this most intensive picture of the most agonized condition of unhappy man. I left him, but I was repeatedly called to him again, in the interval which elapsed between this period and the day of his execution, to bring the strength of our art to bear against the effects of a determination to refuse all sustenance, and to resist all the confirmatory aids of necessity, resignation, and religion. All the efforts of the jailor were not able to get him to take food; the unabated strength of his despair occupied every nerve, and chased from his mind all lesser pains of hunger or bodily privations and wants; his moral apoplexy had extended its deadening effects to

his physical system; and, as he lay chained by the leg to his stone couch, it could have been detected only from low murmuring groans, alternated, at long intervals, with sudden yells, that there was any real living action in his mind or body.

The ministrations of the clergymen who attended him were likely to be of greater service to him than anything within the power of our professional art; yet they informed me that such was the force of the agony under which he laboured, that all their efforts had been unavailing to introduce into his mind any one sustaining or comforting principle or sentiment. For many days, his determination to take no food continued as strong as at the beginning, whereby his whole system became emaciated and deranged; and, even when the burning pangs of hunger and thirst, the most acute of all bodily pains, rose upon him to such a height that his moral anguish was forced, for a moment, to cede some portion of the territory of feeling to their irresistible impulse, he gave way to the imperative necessity like a maniac, starting up and seizing the can of water that stood by his couch, and, after draining it to the bottom, dashing it from him, and falling back again into the depth of his misery.

The period of his execution was approaching; but he had become so weak that I gave it as my opinion that he would not be able to walk to the gallows. A fever had been induced by the inflammation which generally results from hunger, acting on what we call the *primæ viæ;* and now, when the moral pyrexia had so far weakened his brain, that the material of suffering seemed almost to be exhausted, he was attacked on the side of the flesh with pains and paroxysms of agony, not much less acute than those he had suffered, and was still, to a great extent, undergoing, from his mental and incurable causes of misery. I had a duty to perform, and I did perform it, by applying to this

man, who was already "betrothed to death," those remedies that might enable him to walk into the arms of his grim bridegroom; yet, I do not blush to own and acknowledge, that I secretly sighed that God would overcome my efforts, and, by taking the poor victim to himself, save him from the death which awaited him at the gallows foot. Yet, how vain are the aspirations of mortals, in those emergencies claimed by Heaven as its own vindicated periods and purposes of divine wrath! The food he rejected, when he was *able* to reject it, was supplied in the form of broths, when he was no longer sensible of the reception of that which was to sustain him for the bearing of the agony he dreaded, of all others—a violent death before an assembled multitude. He was saved from one death for the purpose of suffering another, and that in very spite of himself, through the instrumentality of the most pitiable state of man, the want of consciousness. When he came to be informed of the manner in which his life had been protracted and saved, for the purpose of being forcibly dragged from him by the relentless arm of public justice, he raved like a madman, expending the remnant of strength that had been saved to him in imprecations against me, in unavailing screams and clanking of the chain that still clung to his emaciated limbs.

On the day of his execution he was as feeble as a child; but the gallows does not admit the plea of illness as an excuse for non-attendance. Emaciated and exhausted, he swooned in the hands of the officers, as they knocked from his limbs the chains that might as well have been applied to the infant that has not yet essayed its first attempt to walk; and, if the necessary time had been allowed for recovering him entirely from these repeated fits, the period comprehended in his sentence might have expired, and he would have been beyond the reach of the law. The executors of justice, themselves the very slaves of form,

repudiated all ceremony, and the unfortunate being was carried to the cart, to be roused, by its horrid wheels, from a swoon to the awful consciousness of being in the act of being hurried to the scaffold, which he had not strength to mount, and yet could not escape. The scene that now presented itself was such that many individuals, whose morbid appetite for horror was insatiable, flew from the place of execution, unable to stand and witness the spectacle of a human being falling from one swoon into another, incapable of keeping his feet, and lifted *softly*, as by the hands of nurses, to receive around his neck the cord that was to strangle him by his own weight. Yet I was forced to witness this sight; for, by a strange contradiction of duties, I was called upon to attend the *patient*, and, by the use of stimulants, to render him susceptible of the pangs of death. Yet what was my art, my medicaments, to those of the executioner of the last act of the law, whose quick and sudden jerk ended in a moment life, disease, terror, and all the ills coiled up in the mortal frame of miserable man!

The circumstances attending the execution of Walter T—— (though not the condemnation, which was reckoned just), were such as to rouse considerably the public attention, and the prints of that day were filled with disquisitions as to the expediency of wounding the feelings of a nation, by executing a man in a situation of mind and body calculated to excite pity and commiseration, and to exclude the feeling of satisfaction which ought to follow the punishment of the most heinous of all crimes. Yet all this was plainly absurd; for, if punishments were to wait the bodily condition of malefactors, the art of man would soon cheat the gallows of its dues, and retribution would be the stalking-horse of deceit. The unusual sufferings of this individual were commemorated in a manner very different from the ephemeral columns of daily prints; for Dr. ——, to whom his body, conform to the sen-

tence, was delivered for dissection, anatomized it; and two years after, I purchased from him, for the price of fifteen guineas, the entire skeleton, to supply a want in my museum, and facilitate the osteological studies of my apprentices.

During the twenty years that passed after the period of his execution, I seldom cast my eyes upon that dry crackling memorial of the unhappy man, as it hung in grim majesty and stoical defiance of the changes of time, and of those exacerbations of passion which, in its animated condition, penetrated its very marrow, without a cold shivering remembrance of his sufferings. On the patella or knee-pan of the left limb there was written, by Dr. ——, who constructed the skeleton, the words "Walter T——, a murderer, executed at ——, the — day of ——." I wrote, on the patella of the other limb—"For the extraordinary circumstances attending his execution, see the —— newspaper, published on the same day;" and I retained a copy of the print in my museum, to gratify the curiosity of those who might be interested in the fate of the being whose bones, as they crackled to the touch, sung that peculiar and heart-striking *memento mori*, which few people, not professionally interested in the sight, can hear and forget. The indescribable interest produced by a skeleton is well known, among anatomists, to produce in young students a peculiar facility in acquiring a knowledge of the immense number of bones, many of them bearing long Greek names, which go to make up the aggregate of the human system; but the fate of Walter T——, which I always communicated to my apprentices, adding the part I myself acted in the dark drama, imparted a peculiar interest to the grim spectacle, which no memory, however treacherous, could, even with the assistance of years, disregard or renounce.

For a period of fifteen years after the execution of that

unfortunate man, my avocations did not lead me into any correspondence of a professional character with the individuals who resided at the house of Mr. T——, the murdered man; but I understood generally, though I could not now tell how I got the intelligence, that William B——, his nephew, having succeeded to the deceased's effects, occupied his house, had got married, and had a large family of children. About the month of December, in the year ——, I was, however, called again to the same house in the fir planting, into which I had not been since that night on which I witnessed the death-struggles of its former proprietor. The emergency which now took me there, was the illness of William B——, who had been seized with that disease called *tic dolourreux*, perhaps the most excruciating of all the ailments incident to the human frame. We are entirely ignorant of its causes, whether procatartic or proximate—all we can say of it being, that it is an affection of the nerves of the face, and particularly of that branch of the fifth pair which comes out at an aperture below the orbit; and that it is attended with such pain—coming on in an instant, generally without premonitory warning—that the devoted victim of its cruelty is often thrown on his back on the floor, where he lies, during the existence of the attack, in a state even beyond what can be figured of the wildest exacerbation of fevered frenzy. I have seen a strong man, who could have stood unappalled before a cannon mouth in the field of battle, running about like a madman, as he felt some internal monitor (a peculiarity in his case) telling him that an attack was coming on —holding out his hands, crying wildly for help, or as if he had been flying from the clutches of a hundred demons, and, in a moment after, laid on his back, in the full grasp of the relentless tormentor, uttering the most heart-rending screams, and requiring the power of several people to hold him down.

Under an attack of this frightful complaint, I found William B———, who, being in the clutch of a paroxysm, was scarcely conscious of my presence. He was extended on his back on a sofa; his fingers were (according to the practice of these victims) pressed on that part of the face where the pain shoots from; sharp cries, keeping pace with the intermitting pangs, were wrung reluctantly from him, filled the house, and might have been heard beyond it; his limbs were restless, striking the foot and sides of the couch, and sometimes dashing them as if he would have broken and destroyed all resisting objects; his eye glanced fiercely around, as if he disdained the supplication of mortal aid in so hopeless a cause. I knew the nature of the disease too well to hope to be able to do him, at that time, any service; the patient himself, by the pressure he was applying to the seat of the pain, was doing all that could be done to ameliorate his sufferings; and, having told his wife that I could be of greater use to him at a time when the pain was off him, I left him, with the intention of calling again, to suggest the application of the only remedy yet known for this complaint.

In a few days, accordingly, I called again, and found the patient recovered from a new attack which had come on during the previous night. He was greatly exhausted, looked pale and anxious, and dreaded intensely another paroxysm, which he said he could not be able to bear. He endeavoured to describe to me his feelings, when the disease arrived at its greatest height, and correctly distinguished between those neuralgic pains, and the fiercest of those that attack the viscera and muscles; bringing out, in his unprofessional language, what I have witnessed, that there is often a power felt by the sufferer of resisting, by some indescribable internal process, the latter kind of pain, while, in the former (and the *tic douloureux* is the worst species), the victim is conscious of no power within himself

of even *bearing*—all his energies, thoughts, and stoical resolutions being put to flight and routed by the fierce, lancinating, burning pangs; and even despair, the ordinary refuge of the miserable, seems to deny the tortured spirit the grim relief of its dark haven.

As the patient proceeded in his description, he occasionally drew deep sighs, looked despairingly, and shuddered—all symptoms of the complaint from which he had suffered so much, and might still suffer; and, after a pause, he asked me, with a timid look, if the disease was known to medical men, or if I thought it *peculiar to him.* I replied that the complaint was well known, and very far from being uncommon; but that, unfortunately, we had not very many remedies to which we could resort or trust for a cure. He looked as if he did not believe me, or doubted my statement, and then asked what the best remedy was. I answered that it was an operation, whereby we divided a part of the facial nerve; and recommended to him the trial of that experiment, for as yet we could not pronounce certainly of its efficacy. He did not seem to be inclined to go into my views; and I asked him if he feared the pain of the operation, and yet dared to face that of his disease, which was a thousand times greater. He replied that he cared nothing for the pain of the operation; but yet he felt that he *could not* undergo it. I looked at him with surprise, and requested an explanation; but he answered me by the question—"Are we not sometimes bound to bear pain?" And, as he uttered these words, he seemed to feel great distress. I replied that I thought we were bound rather to get quit of pain by every means in our power, and that all mankind acted on that principle—a circumstance to which my profession owed its existence and success.

"But if this extraordinary, this *miraculous* pain is not sent for some purpose," he said, "why is it that, the moment

I think of removing it, an attack comes upon me?" I cannot explain that, I replied; and he then went on. "The last time you were sent for, I was seized, after my wife despatched you the message; and now," holding up his hand, "behold it comes again, the very instant I begin to talk of a remedy! Yet I must suffer—it is ordained that I must suffer—it is right and just that I should suffer. Welcome, ye dreadful messenger whom I fear and tremble at, yet love! You see, sir, he comes!"

The unhappy man spoke truth: an attack of his disease came on him at that moment, and he fell back on the couch, screaming, and pressing, with all his force, his hand against the seat from which the pains lancinated through the bones and muscles of his face. His cries brought his wife to his assistance; but it is one of the characteristics of this disease, that assistants and comforters can only look on and weep, so utterly does it defy and mock all human efforts. I left him in the charge of his wife, to whom I gave some directions, rather to revive her hope and remove from her countenance a painful anxiety that clouded it, than with any hope of affording relief. As I proceeded through the planting in which the house was situated, I heard his cries for some distance; and, while I pitied the victim, called up into my mind his sentiments, which struck me as being peculiar and mysterious. His conviction of some connection between an attack of his complaint and his attempt to get it removed, was clearly a fancy; yet the existence of such an idea indicated something wrong either in his mind or conscience—even with the admission that a pain so extraordinary might itself suggest, to a sober-minded man, some thoughts of Divine retribution, where there was no crime to be expiated of a deeper die than the most of mankind are in the habit of committing.

Whatever might be the ground of the delusion under

which the patient laboured, it was necessary, at all events, to remove the notion that an effort to cure the disease had any supposed mysterious connection with an attack; the best way of accomplishing which was to hold forth, by calling and applying remedial processes, the handle of an occasion to the unseen power to make the attack, which, if not taken advantage of (and who could suppose it would?) might expose the absurdity of his suspicion or conviction. I accordingly called again next day, and observed, as I entered, that the patient's eye scanned me with a look as eloquent as words, that I had brought with me another attack of his complaint. I ascertained that he had not had an attack since the one I witnessed, and then told him, that, as he would not consent to allow the nerve to be severed, I had brought a lotion which might prove efficacious, if applied to the diseased parts in the manner I explained to him. I held out to him the bottle, but he looked at it with fear, and said, he *could not*, he *dared not* take it.

"Doctor," said he, "this disease must take its course. It never was designed for ordinary mortals, and I cannot believe that you or any medical man ever witnessed in another these excruciating tortures. There is nothing human about this visitation." "Nonsense," said I, "I know nothing of miraculous diseases." "Like the forked lightning," he proceeded, "it leaves no trace of its progress. There is no wound, no inflammation, no fever, not a spot in the skin, to tell that, under it, and, as it were, touching it, there exists agonies, in comparison of which the pain of red-hot irons applied to the skinless flesh (under which nature would claim the relief of sinking) is as nothing; for I cannot faint—I cannot get refuge in insensibility—I cannot die." "Still, all natural," said I. "No," he went on, "speak no more of remedies against Heaven's visitations; but let me suffer, that, by suffering, I may ex-

piate. I shall immediately have another visit from my messenger. Oh, sir, who shall help him that is accursed of Heaven."

He turned his body from me, to hide his face, and I could perceive that he shook as if from a spasm of the heart. I told him that he talked like one under the dark veil of religious melancholy, or rather like one who had something on his conscience different from the ordinary burden of human frailty, making him attribute to retribution what was only a disease incident to mankind; that Heaven was not against the cure of any mortal; and that he would, for certainty, have no attack that day, nor, perhaps, for several days, especially if he used the lotion I recommended to him. He heard me in silence, shaking, at intervals, his head, solemnly and incredulously, turning his eyes to heaven, and clasping his hands as if in mental adjuration. "It will not do," he cried. "I have more faith in the language of this monitor than in that of frail man. I will have another attack instantly. Leave me! Why will you force me thus to brave heaven, between whose dread powers and me there is a secret compact recorded here—here?"—striking his chest. "This disease I fear and tremble at; but it is *not* hell, and, by bearing the one, I may avoid the other. So do I claim these pangs, sharper than scorpions' tongues, as my right, my due, my redemption. Oh God! what a price do I pay for relief from eternal fire!"

He sat down as he concluded these mysterious words, in an attitude of expectation of the coming paroxysm, and I conceived that my best reply to his wild and incoherent ideas would be, the refuting fact of the absence of any attack at that time. I, therefore, left him; and, as I passed along the passage to the door, was met by his anxious wife, who inquired of me, with tears in her eyes, if I knew what this malady was, which, leaving no trace of its presence, yet produced such a pain as she never

thought mortal was doomed to suffer; and, above all, she was solicitous to know if I had got any insight into her husband's mind, which was loaded with some awful burden in some degree connected with this calamity; for, since ever the first attack, she had got no rest at night, and no peace during day—his haunted vigils, his sleep-walking, his dreaming, his agonies, and prayers, being unremitting and heart-rending, as well to him as to her. She wept bitterly as she concluded this account of her sufferings.

I could give her little satisfaction beyond assuring her that the disease had nothing supernatural about it, as her husband thought, and giving it as my opinion that the unusual character of the complaint might, in a serious, contemplative-minded man, have given rise to the delusion that it came direct from heaven as a punishment of errors incident to fallen humanity. I informed her, also, of my expectation of removing this delusion, partly by impressing him with the disappointment he would likely feel that day in experiencing no attack consequent upon my remedial endeavours; and, in a short time, I might prevail upon him to allow me to perform the operation I had recommended.

I left the poor woman praying fervently that I might succeed; for, until some change was effected on her husband's mind, she could expect little peace, far less happiness, on earth. As I proceeded homewards, I had great misgivings as to my having exhausted the secret of this man's misery; yet my efforts at fathoming the true mystery of this unusual imputation of a disease to the avenging retribution of an offended God were unavailing, and I left to time to discover what was beyond my power.

As I expected, I found, on my next call, that no attack had followed my last visit. The patient was somewhat easier; yet his mind was apparently still greatly troubled. I impressed him with the vanity of the delusion under

which he laboured, and prevailed upon him to consent to the application of the stimulating lotion to the seat of the disease. In yielding this consent, he underwent a great struggle; I noticed him several times in the attitude of silent prayer, and, as I was about to begin the application of the medicine, he recoiled from my grasp, turning up his eyes, muttering indistinct words, and trembling like one about to undergo a severe punishment. All this had nothing to do with the character of the simple stimulant I was about to apply, but was clearly the working of his terror at the application of a remedial process of any kind to a heaven-sent disease; and I was latterly obliged to use a degree of force, assisted by the energies of his wife, before I succeeded in my endeavours to get the medicine applied. His fears and tremors, silent prayers and murmurings, continued during the whole time I was occupied in rubbing in the liniment; and, when I had finished, he fell on his knees and prayed silently for several minutes, and then threw himself down exhausted on the couch.

Two days afterwards, I called again, and found that there had still been no new attack of the disease—a fact communicated to me, on my entrance, by Mrs. B——, who was auguring from it the happiest results. On the day following, however, he had a most violent onset immediately before I called; and I ascertained that, for two days previous, the liniment had been discontinued, in consequence of a return of the patient's conscientious scruples; so that I could now reverse upon him his own argument, which I did not fail to do, pointing out to him and impressing upon him that, in place of Heaven being offended at his using remedial measures, he had now experienced its displeasure at not adopting those means which Providence points out to man for arresting the progress of disease. I therefore urged him, with all the force of my reasoning and power of persuasion, to consent to undergoing the

operation I had proposed, the dividing of the nerve—backing my arguments with the stated conviction that, if he did not consent, he might be a martyr for many years to the most painful of diseases, and be deprived of all comfort in this world. He heard me in vain; for his conscientious scruples had leagued with his former terror, and he rejected my advice; but he did it as one compelled by a secret power, which overawed him by its stern decrees, and scattered his opposing resolutions with the breath of its whisper.

Justice to myself and my profession required that I should not visit again a man who rejected my advice, and whose case seemed fitted rather for the ministrations of a servant of Christ than a disciple of Æsculapius. Several days passed without my hearing anything of the condition of the unhappy patient; but I had no hopes of his having got quit of his neuralgia, which too often adheres to its victim like a double-tongued adder.

One evening I was in my study, reading an old copy of Celsus, over a fire nearly exhausted, and by the light of a candle, whose long black wick indicated the attention I was devoting to the old physician. The night was dark and windy, and I was assured that, if no emergency demanded my presence out of doors (which I fervently wished), I stood little risk of being disturbed by any *walking* patients, generally deemed by us the most troublesome of all our employers. At my side hung my skeletons; and, among the rest, that of Walter T——; around were other monuments of the frailty and the agonies of human life, all too familiar to me to take off my attention from the old chronicler of diseases, their causes, symptoms, and cures.

While thus occupied, my bell rang with great violence and I started up from the study into which I had fallen. In an instant, my door was flung open. William B—— stood before me, the picture of a man who had broken out

of bedlam: his eyes flashed the fire of an excruciating agony; his right hand was pressed convulsively on his cheek; his left made wild signs, intended to supply the want of words which his tongue could not utter; every symptom indicated that he was under the full grasp of his implacable enemy. Recovering his breath, he cried out, "I cannot bear this any longer." "Patience," said I. "No!" he proceeded, "the extent of human powers of suffering may be overrated by superior avengers. I must brave Heaven, or die under its exaction of the last pang of an overstrained retribution; death will not come to my prayer, and I am stung to rebellion. Will you, sir, use your operating knife against the wrath of Heaven? I am resolved. Though conscience cannot be amputated, this hell-scorched nerve may be severed. Come next what will, this must be ended. I am at last prepared."

This frenzied burst, wrung from a mind labouring under some terrible burden, startled and alarmed me; and it was some moments before I could perceive the meaning which was veiled under his strange words and manner. He had been seized with an attack of his complaint, and, unable to bear it, had run out of the house to seek some relief at my hands. I requested him to be seated; and, though I had to struggle with the disadvantage of candle light, and the want of one of my assistants, I resolved upon performing the operation before the agony had abated.

I accordingly rung for my oldest apprentice, and made preparations for the work, which, though simple, requires skill and care. The patient was seated on a chair, formed for receiving the back of the head on a soft cushion, and used by me for operations on the upper extremities. Everything was ready; my apprentice came in, and, as he passed quickly forward, struck his head against the skeleton of Walter T——, that hung at the side, and a little to the back of the operating chair on which the patient was seated.

That *perterricrepus* of dry bones crackled as the body swung from side to side, and attracted the attention of the man, whose eye, tortured as he was, sought fearfully the cause of the strange noise.

I saw that his attention was in an instant rivetted on the figure, and perceived that his look was directed to the words (written in large letters) on the knee pan. The knife was in my hand, and my apprentice was about to lay hold of his head. The attitude of the man arrested my eye, and I witnessed, what I have often heard of, but never saw before, that extraordinary erection of the hair of the head, produced by extreme fear, and known by the name of horripilation.

I now thought he was afraid of the knife—but I was soon undeceived. With a loud yell he started up suddenly and violently—his hair seemed to move with horror—his body was in the attitude of flying from the figure, yet his limbs obeyed not his fear; he stood rivetted to the spot, with his eyes chained on the skeleton, his lips wide open, and his hands extended. In this position he remained for several seconds, while my apprentice and I gazed on in wonder on the horror-stricken victim.

"I said I would brave Heaven," he exclaimed in wild accents, "by curing a heaven-sent disease; but is Heaven to be braved by man? How came that figure there?"

"That is easily explained," said I.

"It is"—he continued—"my cousin, Walter T——, who died for me? Is he not heaven-sent also? See, he moves and nods his grim head at me, and says, 'You shall not escape the vengeance of the Almighty. The nerve shall *not* be cut, and your agonies must continue to the last moment of your existence.' And who has a better right to speak these flaming words, than he whose cause is vindicated by the powers above—he whose agonies, produced by me—me, wretched, miserable man!—were ended by an

unjust death on the scaffold, where I should have expiated the crime for which he suffered. Guard me from that grim spectre! I cannot stand that sight!" And, with a loud crash, he fell on the floor.

In the midst of the confusion produced in my mind by what I had seen and heard, the glare of a revealed mystery flashed upon me; and I shuddered even to think of what might turn out to be true. Could it it be possible that that wretched man whose bones hung before me—whose sufferings at his trial, in the jail, on the scaffold, were unprecedented, and such as no man ever endured—was innocent of the crime for which he was hanged? Even the suspicion was too painful to me; and I recoiled from the skeleton, as my eye, led by my thoughts, rested on the grim memorial. The agitation into which I was thrown rendered me incapable of thought. "Get him home! get him home!" I cried to my apprentice, and sought, in the retirement of another room, some refuge from these sights, and an opportunity of calmly contemplating all the bearings of this apparently dreadful discovery.

My apprentice, with difficulty, got the unhappy man into my coach, and took him home. Next day, I was called, early in the forenoon, by an express from his wife. I found him in bed, in the very room where Mr. T—— was murdered. An attack of his disease was upon him, and his conscience had roused him to a degree bordering on madness.

Vain, indeed, would be my effort to describe what I now saw and heard; the powers of the physical and moral demons that externally and internally, at the same moment, wrung his nerves and fired his brain, seemed to vie with each other in the degree of torture to which they were capable of elevating his sufferings. His broken exclamations shewed that he was more and more convinced that the pain he endured was a part of the punishment of the crime

that lay on his conscience; and, being only a foretaste of that he was doomed to suffer in another world, his imagination was haunted by the shadows of coming ills, a thousand times more terrible than were those he was struggling with, dreadful as those were. Screams, prayers, and ejaculations, succeeded each other unremittingly. As Despair threw over him her dark mantle, he raised himself in the bed, and, grasping the bedclothes, wrung them between his hands, and twisted them in intricate torsels round his arms, beating his head against the posts, and gnashing his teeth with the fury of a maniac.

I waited until the paroxysm should pass over, in order to get from him the dreadful truth. His wife looked on him with eyes where no tear softened the fiery glance of horror and despair, and I conjectured, from her changed appearance, that she had heard some part of his confession. All at once he became calm, and I perceived he fixed his look upon me. I returned steadily his glance. Holding out his arms, he said, with an effort to resist an impulse to fury—

"Doctor, it must out. Heaven knows it, and what avails it that it is concealed from earth? Dear wife! once the beloved of my soul, know ye that, for ten years, you have nightly taken to your soft confiding bosom, a——." Here he stopped, as if the word were a physical thing sticking in his throat.

"A kind husband," said his wife.

"A murderer!" he said—"ay, the murderer, first of an uncle, and then of a cousin! Turn from me your eyes, and I will confess all—for now my relief is in confession; and that will not be satisfied till I throw myself at the back of the prison door, and cry through the gratings to let me in for mercy's sake. I lived with my uncle, but I was not his heir; and the death that seemed long a-coming, could, at any rate, only benefit my cousin, Walter T——, whose appa-

rition I saw yesterday, and see now—dreadful sight! My bad habits generated a morbid desire for money, which I could not want. I stole my uncle's watch, and heard him blame my cousin. My fancy took the hint, and I formed, with a care worthy of a better cause, a deep scheme, whereby I might, by one spring, jump into the possession and enjoyment of wealth. I waited the first fall of snow, and, with my cousin's stolen shoes, walked from that window to his house, where I deposited the originals of the foot-prints, together with a pistol and the stolen watch, by introducing them through a small skylight on the top of his house. I then returned to my uncle's house by another path, entered his bed-room, where he was sleeping at the fire, pretended that some one was at the window, drew it up so that the servants might hear it, turned round, shot (with another pistol) my uncle through the chest, and cried out at the window to stop the murderer. An alarm was raised; some one ran for my cousin, who was found in his own house; while I hastened for you, who became a tool in my hands. Why need I proceed? What follows is known. What preceded my crime, I have no patience to tell: how I seduced my cousin, in moments of intoxication, to engage in conversations afterwards proved against him; how I got my uncle to blame him for stealing the watch, in presence of the housekeeper; and many other ingenious treacherous schemes. By getting my cousin convicted, I removed out of the way the only impediment between me and my uncle's property. He was hanged, and I took his place as my uncle's heir. Thus was I guilty of a double murder. How, O God! have I been brought to tell what I have for fifteen years shuddered to think of? But it has been wrung from me by a heaven-sent calamity, which has, for these few moments, intermitted, by Heaven's decree, to allow me breath and power to make this confession; and now, being done, my pain comes again, and these crackling bones of

Walter T—— rattle in my ears and dance before my eyes. Whither shall I fly for refuge? Heaven, earth, and hell are against me—my own flesh wars with my soul, and my soul with my flesh!"

And he again twisted the clothes round his arms, and wrestled with the opposing energies of his own muscles. On the other side of me was a scene not less affecting. His wife, struck to the heart by the horrible confession, had fallen on the floor in a swoon. Shall I confess it? The instant I saw in her signs of recovery, I hurried out of the house. What I heard and saw; what I cogitated of the part I took in the death of that poor innocent man, Walter T——; what my fancy conjured up of his agonies, contrasted with his innocence, and the injustice that was done to him, by the misdirected laws of his country—was too much for me, and I flew for relief to the duties of my profession.

I afterwards requested my assistant to attend the unhappy patient in my place. He reported to me that, when he called next day, William B—— was in a condition, if possible, worse than that in which I had witnessed him. He had contracted an irresistible desire to throw himself into the hands of justice; and, in order to get his wish effected, had leaped from the window in his shirt, and had got a considerable way through the planting, on his way to the house of the procurator-fiscal. He was overtaken and seized; but he fought long with the people who had caught him—making the wood ring with his screams, and crying that, as the murderer of his uncle and cousin, it was necessary, ordained by heaven, and conform to justice, that he should be hanged.

My assistant had been able to yield him no relief; and I was called upon by Mrs. B——, who entreated me, with tears in her eyes, to try and devise some means of putting an end to the terrible state of suffering in which she was

placed. She attempted to make me believe that her husband was deranged in his mind, and had merely *conceived* the circumstances of the confession he had made in my presence. I did not endeavour to undeceive the poor woman; but the conclusion I had come to was almost exclusive of any doubt of the truth of what had been wrung from the patient; and I contented myself with stating that, if there was any delirium about him, it might be relieved by the cessation of the painful disease which, in all likelihood, produced it. She then inquired if it were not possible, by any means, however violent, to attempt a cure of the disease, in spite of the opposing efforts of her husband; and I replied, that the remedy formerly proposed might be resorted to if the patient were bound down, or held by the energies of strong men, while the operation was in the act of being performed; but that such a step could only be justified by derangement or madness, and the uncertain nature of the remedy was, besides, a strong reason against its being so applied. Glad to grasp at any hope of reducing the amount of her misery, she was not inclined to hesitate, for an instant, about the propriety or possibility of the scheme of relief I had hinted at, and said she would have individuals present in the house to apply the necessary restraining force, at any time I chose to fix for carrying the purpose into execution. For the sake of the poor woman and her distressed family, I felt disposed to make one other attempt at ameliorating a grief which, however, I feared, had its cause much beyond the reach of a surgeon's knife, and fixed an hour next day for attending at the house, with a view to ascertain if any consent could be wrung from the unhappy man to allow something to be done at least for his body.

I accordingly kept my appointment; but found that matters had, in the meantime, assumed a different and more serious aspect. The patient was now bound down by

strong ropes, and two stout men sat beside him, ready to resist his efforts to escape, or to commit any act of violence. He had that morning jumped from his bedroom window, and flown, in a state approaching to nakedness, to the prison, situated about two miles distant, at the door of which he knelt down, and beseeched the jailor, in tones of piteous supplication, to receive him into what he called his *sanctuary*. The jailor, seeing a naked man supplicating to get *in* to a place so generally feared and shunned, concluded he was mad, and paid little attention to his asseverations—made, as he said, before God, that he was guilty of murder, and wished to be hanged, with a view to an expiation of his crime. Having got his name, the jailor sent to his wife, and, assistance having been brought, he was carried home, crying bitterly all the way that no one would take vengeance on him, and ease the burning pangs of his mind, by punishing him according to the extent of his crime.

The moment I entered, I saw, by the peculiar light and motion of his eye, that he was on the point of madness, which would likely exhibit itself in the form of a brain fever. He looked wildly at me, and, rugging at the ropes, attempted to release himself. I remember many of his expressions, which, however affecting through the ear, would appear only as rant to a reader.

The supernatural strength of an access of brain fever enabled him to burst the cords; and the attendants were obliged to apply their hands to keep him down, until they could again bind him. Phrenitis, with all its horrors, had commenced. The history of a brain fever is the history of a man when he has ceased, from the very extremity of his agony, to interest feelings, which seek in vain for traces of humanity in the raving maniac; and why should I try to describe what never has been, and never will be described with any approach to the terrible truth? Heaven was at last merciful, and closed his sufferings with the seal of death.

RATTLING, ROARING WILLIE.

RATTLING, ROARING WILLIE, an ancient Border minstrel, was a well-known character, in the south of Scotland, in the time of James V. His title, Sir Walter Scott supposes, was derived from his bullying disposition; but this, we humbly think, is not precisely the term which the great novelist ought to have employed on the occasion. It rather does Willie an injustice; for, although, according to Johnson, bully means no more than a noisy, quarrelsome person, yet usage has associated with it a certain degree of cowardice; and we are apt to look on a bully as a vainglorious fellow, who is much more ready with his tongue than his hands. Now, this was by no means the case with Willie. He certainly was a rattling, roaring boy, as described by his soubriquet; but he was no craven; he could drink and fight with any man that ever handled cup or cudgel; was at all times as ready to bite as to bark; and, indeed, it was his pugnacious disposition that ultimately caused his destruction.*

Our intention at present, however, is, not to enter into a defence of Willie's character, which we suspect must now be left to shift for itself, but to relate an adventure of his which is not very generally known; and therefore, we go on to say, that our "jovial harper" once took it into his head to treat himself to a tramp through Fife, to see what kind of ale they brewed on the other side of the

* This sturdy beggar of whom Sir Walter Scott makes mention, was hanged at Jedburgh for having killed in a duel, fought with swords, one of his own profession. If the combatants had been knights, the survivor would have stood a better chance for a title than for a halter.—ED.

Frith, and generally, to see what sort of living he might pick up there. Having come to this resolution, Willie slung his harp on his back, took a stout cudgel in his fist, and, after partaking of a Hawick gill with a crony in the ancient little town from which the celebrated measure just spoken of takes its name, he started, and drank, and fought, and roared, and played his way through the country, till he arrived at the shore of Leith, where he intended ferrying over to Kinghorn. The ferry boat had just put off, when Willie reached the quay, all breathless and exhausted —for he had run every step of the way from Edinburgh, where he had stopped to refresh his inward man; and where he would have tarried much longer in the discharge of this important duty, had he not been told that, if he did not make haste, he would certainly lose the boat. On perceiving the latter pulling away from the shore—"Haud there! haud!" roared out Willie. "Back, ye villains! and tak me owre; and I'll gie ye a stoup o' the best in Kinghorn."

Obedient to Willie's summons—the more so, perhaps, on account of the promise that was associated with it—the boatman put about, and the minstrel was taken on board, and in due time safely deposited on the opposite shore; where, having redeemed his pledge to the seamen, he started for the interior of the country; and, after a walk of some fifteen or twenty miles, which he had traversed with various success, he made up to a respectable looking house at a little distance from the road, where he proposed to seek quarters for the night.

The house alluded to was the residence of the laird of Whinnyhill, or Winnel, as he was more shortly called.

Being a total stranger in the place, Willie assumed a modesty of manner and quietness of demeanour which, it must be confessed, were not amongst the number of his natural failings; but he felt that he could not, with pro-

priety, use the same freedom here that he did in his own part of the country, where he was well known to everybody. It was, therefore, with this sort of mock-modesty, that Willie appeared at the laird of Whinnyhill's gate, and sought a night's quarters from a person who happened to be standing at the said gate when he approached. This person was the laird himself.

"A night's quarters!" said the latter, in reply to Willie's request, and, at the same time, eyeing him archly, and exhibiting a degree of respect in his manner which Willie was grievously at a loss to understand—"that ye shall hae, sir—a score o' them an' ye choose, and the best that my puir hoose can afford, to the bargain." And, after bestowing on his visitor another look of intelligence, which intimated a vast deal more than the latter could comprehend, the laird conducted him into the house. On entering, Willie made directly, and of his own accord, for his usual quarters in such cases—the kitchen; but this he did in direct opposition to the laird, who was conducting him towards his best apartment. On observing, however, that Willie insisted on taking the former course—

"Weel, weel, sir," he said, laughing, "ye will hae yer joke oot, I see; but ye'll do me the honour" (this he said in a whisper) "to join me ben the hoose when ye tire o' yer amusement?"

To this proposal, Willie, though perfectly at a loss to comprehend the meaning of all this extraordinary kindness, readily assented; but, in the meantime, proceeded to the destination which he had originally proposed to himself. Here he found assembled the domestic servants of the family—lads and lassies, to the number of eight or nine. This was just what Willie wanted—an auditory; and he lost no time in giving them a taste of his calling. In ten minutes, he had the kitchen in an uproar with noise and laughter. He sang, danced, played, and pulled the girls

about, till one and all declared they had never seen such a harumscarum chiel in all their lives. To all these various sources of entertainment, he added some of his best stories, which, as much from the sly and *pawky* manner in which they were told, as from their inherent humour, were found to be irresistible; and the consequence was, that there was not one within hearing of them capable of doing anything else than laughing or listening to the sly narrator.

Willie, in short, as he always was, was triumphant. Amongst the merry minstrel's auditory on this occasion, was the laird himself; and none seemed more to enjoy the fun than he did, although there was all along in his manner that most unaccountable degree of respect for his guest, which had already marked his conduct towards him, and which the object of it had such difficulty in comprehending. If this circumstance, however, puzzled Willie, how much more was he confounded, when the laird whispered to him, that, "as they had now had plenty o' daffin, he would be glad of his company ben the hoose, where the guidwife had prepared a bit comfortable supper for them!" It was in vain that Willie said, he "wad just remain where he was, and tak a mouthfu' alang wi' the servants —that he was not in the habit of sitting at gentlefolks' tables," &c. No excuses of this or any other kind would avail with the laird, who again bestowed on Willie one of those mysterious looks of intelligence which have been already alluded to, and insisted upon his accompanying him "ben the hoose." Finding that his host would take no denial, and perceiving, moreover, that it was at least all well meant, Willie at length followed the laird, and soon found himself seated at a plentiful board, with the "guidwife" dressed in her best at the head.

Much, however, as all this surprised the jovial harper, it did not in the least disconcert him, or deprive him, in

any degree, of the presence of mind and ready wit—shall we add impudence?—that was natural to him. Diffidence, as has been already hinted, was no part of his character: and he, therefore, very soon found himself perfectly at ease in his unwonted situation, and joked away with the laird and his wife till the roof rang again with the laughter of a joyous party; but it was not till the bottle had been introduced, and had made several rounds, that Willie began to shine forth in meridian splendour. The stimulating liquor had no sooner begun to operate, than he broke out into the wild and obstreperous glee which so signally characterised him in his cups; and renewing (but now with double effect, in consequence of the drink he had swallowed, and the generally comfortable state in which he found himself after an excellent supper) the part he had acted in the kitchen, he roared, and shouted, and sang, till the very rafters shook—slapped the goodwife on the shoulders, and griped the hand of the husband till he nearly squeezed the blood out of his finger ends.

Both the laird and his lady were delighted with their guest; and it is certain that he was no less pleased with them. As it got late, however, the latter retired from the apartment, and left her husband and Willie to finish the night and the bottle by themselves—a task which they instantly set about with great zeal and good will. Cup followed cup with marvellous celerity, and with each the bonds of friendship between the revellers were drawn closer and closer. They grasped each other's hands in the fulness of their hearts, and joined together in the choruses of the bacchanalian ditties, with which Willie, from time to time, at once varied and enlivened the festivity of the evening. It must be remarked, however, that, during the night, the laird had more than once hinted to his guest that he knew more of him than he was perhaps aware of.

"However, let that flee stick to the wa'," he would add. "I'm no ane to spoil onybody's sport, much less yours. Only tak my advice, sir, and tak care o' yoursel, if ye be gaun through the Middlemass wood; for there's been twa or three loose-looking chiels seen dodgin aboot there since yesterday morning."

"Ye ken mair o' me than I'm aware o', my honest friend," said Willie, on the occasion alluded to, in reply to his host's hints and insinuations, and at the same time slapping him on the shoulder. "I weel believe that, for I'm weel kent in the south country; but, bating the drap drink, and a sough about my being rather fond o' the lassies, ye could hear nae ill o' me, I think."

"Oh, no, sir—the ne'er a bit," replied his host; "nae ill ava. Thae twa things just comprehend the very warst I ever heard o' ye."

"And as to the chiels in the Middlemass wood, laird," continued Willie, "I'll tak my chance o' them. An' I should forgather wi' them, I hae a bit airn here" (and he clapped his hand on his sword) "that has stood me in guid stead mony a time before, and I'm willin to trust a guid deal till't yet. I can either tak or gie a clour, when such things are gaun."

"'Od, sir, but ye play yer character to the life!" shouted out the delighted laird. "I've seen twa or three maskins and mummins in my day, but confound me if ever I saw ane come up to ye! Ye haena said or dune a thing the nicht oot o' joint—a' clean and richt, as if ye had been at the trade a' yer life."

"The deil's in the man!" replied Willie, in amazement at the singularity of the laird's remarks, "and havena I been at it a' my life—ay, sin' I was nae bigger than a pint stoup."

"Ah! ha! ha! very guid, very guid," roared out Whinnyhill. "There's nae drivin ye into a corner, I see, sir.

Here's to ye again, sir, and lang may ye be spared to amuse yersel and ither folk too!" Saying this, the laird, who was already within a trifle of being floored, turned over such another quantity of liquor as threatened to consummate the catastrophe.

His example was immediately followed by Willie, who, though far from being in a perfectly sound condition, was yet, from long practice, better able to stand his drink than his host. Still both were in such a state that it was impossible their carouse could go on much longer; and accordingly, by common consent, it soon after came to a close, but not, it must be observed, before they had finished every drop of drinkable liquor that stood before them. This accomplished, the laird, though his way was but a devious one, conducted the minstrel to his sleeping apartment, where he left him for the night; and here again the latter's surprise was excited, by finding that he had been shown into what was evidently the best bedroom in the house. The sheets were as white as a wreath of snow, while the bed itself was of the softest down, presenting to Willie a very striking contrast to the bundles of straw and coarse ragged mats which formed his usual couch during his peregrinations.

On observing this climax to the singularly kind treatment which he had met with in his present quarters, Willie flung himself down into a chair, and endeavoured to think as well as he could over the events of the night, and to see if he could hit upon any plausible conjecture regarding the cause of the extraordinary hospitality that had been shown him; and, with a look of drunken gravity, he began thus to cogitate within himself.

"The deil hae me, but this beats a'! I've often heard the folk o' Fife were queer folk, and, by my faith, I find it true. But it's a' on the richt side. I wish I could find such queer folk everywhar I gaed to. Nae queer folk o'

this kind in our part o' the country. Faith, Willie, lad, ye fell on yer feet whan ye cam here. The best in the hoose! Naething less, as I'm a sinner; and as much drink as"—here Willie hiccupped violently—"as ony decent man wad wish to hae under his belt—that's, no to be the waur o't; and, to crown a', a bed that micht ser' the King himsel. This *is* what I ca' treatin a man weel. And such a canty hearty cock o' a landlord, too! I haena seen his match this mony a day, and I'm fear'd they're owre thin sawn for me to see't for mony a day to come." And here Willie paused for a considerable time, to indulge in fancies which were either too profound or came too thick for utterance. At length, however, starting up from his reverie, having been unable, evidently, to make anything of his conjecture, "I'm much obliged to him, at ony rate," he muttered, "and that's a' I can say about it." And, immediately after, he tumbled into bed. Willie, however, had not lain here more than a minute, when his attention was attracted by a low murmuring, as if of two persons in conversation in the adjoining apartment.

The partition, which was close by his ear, was of wood; and he found that, by listening attentively, he could gather pretty fully all that passed; and to this employment, therefore, he immediately betook himself, when he discovered that the laird and his wife were the speakers. The result of Willie's application on this occasion was his overhearing the following conversation. His own share of it, as it was of course interjectional and inaudible to the parties, we put within parentheses.

"But are ye sure it's him, John, after a'?" said the laird's better half.

("Him!—wha?" muttered Willie.)

"Sure that it's him, guidwife!" replied the laird, hiccupping at intervals as he spoke. "Deil a doot's o' that! Did ye ever ken me mistaen in my life, when I said I was

sure o' a' thing? I kent him the moment I clapped my ee upon him, although I never saw him in my life before."

("Did ye, faith?" here again interjected Willie, who had no doubt that he himself was the subject of the conversation to which he was listening. "My word, then, but ye're a gleg chiel.")

"There's that about him that canna be mistaen by ony thing o' a quick ee, however he may disguise himsel."

("Disguise himsel! What does the body mean by that? Whan did I disguise mysel, unless it war wi' liquor? Maybe he means that though.")

"And, besides," continued the unconscious speaker, "hadna I certain information, frae a quarter that I couldna doot, that he had set oot on ane o' his vagaries, and that there was every reason to believe that he had come oor way. And it's the very dress, too, that was described to me."

("By my troth, then, but that's queer aneuch!" here quoth Willie. "Wha the deil could hae tellt you that I was on the tramp, and that I was coming this way? My very dress described, too—'od, that's unaccountable.")

"It's a queer notion that o' the man's wanderin aboot the country this way," here interposed the laird's wife. "I'm sure he maun meet wi' mony odd adventures whan he's on thae tramps."

("Deil a doot's o't—mony a ane; and that I hae met wi' the nicht's ane o' them. But what's strange in the notion o' me gaun aboot the country? How else could I mak a leevin o't?")

"His faither had the same trick before him," replied the laird to his wife's remarks.

("That's a curst lie—my faither, honest man, was a douce, decent, sober-livin weaver.")

"I reckon't, guidwife, a lucky thing that he has come oor way."

("Do ye, indeed!—then, feth, say do I.")

"He'll no forget oor kindness, I dare say."

("The ne'er a bit o' that I'll do.")

"And maybe he'll help us to oor ain again, frae the laird o' Haudthegrip."

("Wi' great pleasure. But hoo do you expect such a service as that frae the like o' me?")

"I've heard o' his doin the like afore. But I say, guidwife, mind we maunna just let on barefacedly that we ken wha he is; for I can see, frae the way he took my hints the nicht, that he doesna like it. A' that I could do, I could na drive him into a corner on that subject. He aye shyed the question. Sae we maun tak nae mair notice o't; for ye ken kings are kittle cattle to deal wi'."

("Kings! Whar the deevil are ye noo, laird? What's a' this aboot?")

"So they're said to be, John," replied the laird's better half; "and I think the less we hae to do wi' them the better."

("My feth, ye're richt there, guidwife, as I ken to my cost. I was ance very near hanged by the king by mistake, amang a wheen Border rievers that he strang up. The rope was aboot my neck before he wad listen to my story, or be convinced that I wasna ane o' the gang.")

"This is the first night," continued the laird's wife, "ever a king was under my roof, and I hope it'll be the last."

Here we must interrupt the dialogue for a moment to say that it would have done any man's heart good to have seen the expression of Willie's countenance when this last sentence reached his ear. The painter's art alone could convey a correct idea of the look of perplexity and amazement which it exhibited. A glimmering of the facts of that singular case which will shortly be made to appear plain enough, began to break in upon him. But, as he

could not yet entirely trust to its feeble light—in other words, could not believe what he heard, or rather could not believe that it applied to him—he lay as still as death, scarcely daring to breathe till he should gather something more regarding the strange insinuation that had just reached him; and for this he had not long to wait.

"Speak laigh, Jenny—speak laigh, woman," said the laird, in reply to his wife's disloyal remark. "He's maybe no sleepin; and I wadna for the best cow in my byre that he heard ye say what ye hae said. I assure you, for my part, guidwife, I'm very proud o' the honour. He's just as guid a fellow as ever I spent a nicht wi'. My faith, he tooms his bicker like a man, as your greybeard 'ill witness in the mornin, guidwife."

Here a loud and long-drawn whee-o-ou from Willie announced that he was now fully enlightened on the mysterious subject of the extraordinary attention, kindness, and hospitality of the Laird of Whinnyhill, and his wife.

There was, in short, he felt, no longer any doubt of the fact, that he had been mistaken by them for no less a personage than the king, James V., who as all our readers know was in the habit of going about the country frequently in disguise; and it was true, as the laird had said, he had heard that he was at this moment abroad on one of those whimsical perambulations; and it was farther true, that he was in the neighbourhood of Whinnyhill.

Here, then, was rather an odd predicament for the southland harper. And he felt it to be so.

"Ta'en for the king, as I'm a sinner!" said Willie—thus following up the whistle of amazement with which he had hailed the disclosure of the astounding fact. "'Od, this cowes the gowan! I've met wi' mony a queer thing in my life, but this beats a' oot and oot, as the weaver's wife said when she couldna find an end to the puddin." And Willie forthwith proceeded to ruminate internally on

the singular situation in which he now found himself; and it was while thus ruminating that he was struck with the bright idea which forms the leading feature in the sequel of our tale. This idea was, to maintain the character which had been thrust upon him, and to continue to enjoy the good living which, judging from what he had already met with, was likely to accrue from the deception. He determined, therefore, to try and throw a little more dignity into his manner, and to be a little more guarded in his language—a good deal of which he felt would scarcely be becoming in a king, whatever character he might choose to personify; and, in conclusion, he resolved, in all cases where he should perceive that he was not mistaken for a prince in disguise—which he was conscious would, after all, be but seldom—to give such hints as should induce the desired belief; and, where it should appear to exist, to confirm it by the same means.

Having chalked out this line of conduct for himself, and having indulged in a few more speculations on the subject, Willie resigned himself to sleep, and, in the morning, awoke —a king in disguise.

True to the resolutions he had formed overnight, and not without ability to act up to them, Willie, on the laird's entrance into the apartment in the morning, to inquire how he had slept, looked as majestic as he could; and, in a familiar, but somewhat condescending manner, saluted him with—

"Ha, laird! how dost? None the worse for thy potations last night? On my royal—ah! on my word, I mean —thou hast been nearer regicide than thou wotest of. Another such night and I would be a dead man!"

"The deil a fear o' ye, sir!" said the laird, now fully confirmed in his belief that it was James that stood before him. "It's no a drap guid soun' liquor that'll kill ye, I warrant; and it was nane o' the warst ye had last nicht, I

assure ye. It wad hae been ill my pairt if it had. And noo, sir," he continued, producing at the same time a huge bottle of brandy which he had hitherto concealed behind his back—"Ye'll just tak a hair o' the dog that bit ye. A toothfu' o' this," filling up a large cup, "'ll keep the cauld morning air aff yer stomach; for, nae doot, sir, yours, after a', is just like other folks."

"Richt soond advice, laird, as I'm a—a sinner. I'll pledge thee most cheerfully," said Willie, stetching out his hand to take the proffered cup, and, thereafter, draining it to the bottom with an eagerness and relish that amazed even the laird, who certainly thought it rather odd in a king.

"Anither, sir?" said the latter, encouraged by the rapidity of his guest's execution, and looking at him slily as he spoke.

"Why, laird, I don't mind if I do," replied Willie. "It warms me like a yard o' Welsh flannel. If my mother's milk had been like that, laird, I would have been sucking still!" Saying this, he turned over another cup with undiminished gusto. Here, in truth, was a weak point in Willie's character. He could not resist liquor; and had the laird persevered in giving him more drink, he would very soon have unhinged him; for there is little doubt that he would have forgotten his assumed dignity, and have swallowed much more than became a king at that unseasonable hour.

Luckily for his guest, however, the laird desisted from pressing the bottle farther, and this danger was avoided.

Willie, again conducted by his host, now proceeded to an apartment, where he found a sumptuous breakfast prepared for him, of which he partook with an appetite that impressed his host with a very high and satisfactory opinion of the state of his sovereign's health; and, being a loyal subject, the circumstance filled him with unfeigned joy.

On the conclusion of the repast—"Weel, sir," said Willie's host, "what direction do ye propose takin noo? I hear there's to be a gran' hanlin at Braehead the nicht. Ye might get some rare fun there, sir, an' ye gaed—just o' the kind ye like."

"Why, thank ye, Whinnyhill—thank ye for the hint! I'll just e'en go there, then. But what's the occasion, laird?"

"A very guid ane, sir—a hoose-heatin. The laird o' Tumlinwa's takin possession o' his new hoose; and he's no ane to stint his freens o' either meat or drink when he brings them thegither. Ye'll want for naething, I'se warrant ye."

"Why, faith, mine honest friend, and these are just the quarters I like," replied Willie, very well pleased to have got such a useful hint as to the direction he ought next to take.

"But," continued the laird, "mind the Middlemass wood, sir, and keep a gleg ee about ye when ye're passin through't; for, as I was sayin before, there's some gay unchancy chiels thereabouts enow."

"Never fear me, laird," replied Willie; "I'll gie as guid's I get ony day—let who likes try't."

Willie being now ready to resume his journey, and having expressed a wish to do so without farther delay—for, in truth, he was not sure how long he might escape detection—the laird accompanied him a little way, to see him, as he said, fairly on his way.

At parting, Willie took his host by the hand, and said, with all the dignity he could muster, and with a look which was intended to convey a great deal more than it would have been perfectly proper to express—

"Fare-ye-well, laird, and many thanks for your hospitality. Depend upon it, I will not soon forget it. It may stand thee in good stead some day." And with this he

walked off with as much majesty as he could conveniently assume, leaving the laird of Whinnyhill highly delighted with his good fortune in having had an opportunity of making the personal acquaintance and friendship of his sovereign.

Willie, in the meantime, pursued his way; and, after two or three hours' smart walking, found himself entering the wood about which he had been cautioned by his late host; and, although as indifferent to danger of the kind here threatened as most men, he thought there would be no harm in keeping the sharp look-out recommended to him.

He now accordingly proceeded with a more wary step, and kept peering around him as he advanced, to prevent his being taken by surprise. And it was not long ere he found that neither his own caution nor the hints which his late host had given him were unnecessary. When he had got about half way through the wood, he perceived three or four suspicious-looking fellows skulking amongst the trees a little in advance of him, and directly in the route he was pursuing.

"By St. Andrew, there they are!" said Willie, on observing the persons alluded to—"the very chiels the laird spoke aboot, or I'm greatly mistaen." And he began to free his sword hilt from those parts of his garment which were likely to interfere with its ready use. Although somewhat alarmed at the appalling odds against him, Willie resolutely held on his course till he arrived within a few paces of the foremost, who stood directly in his way with a drawn sword in his hand, and who he now perceived was masked and muffled to the eyes in a cloak, as were also all his companions.

On perceiving the hostile attitude of the fellow, Willie also drew, stopped short, and demanded the reason of his being thus interrupted in his peaceful progress. To this

inquiry no immediate reply was made. The ruffians seemed doubtful of their object—indeed, Willie overheard them say as much; and they appeared, besides, rather disconcerted by his resolute bearing and by the circumstance of his being armed. This he also overheard. Observing their hesitation, and thinking his assumed dignity, if announced, might terrify the fellows, and save him from the perils of an unequal encounter, Willie called out to them—"What, ye knaves! would ye kill your King?" Never were expressions more unluckily chosen—never imposition worse timed.

"It is him! it is him!" shouted out the ruffians in reply. "Down with the tyrant!—down with the spoiler! Strike, Geordie, strike, for a thousand merks." And the whole rushed upon Willie at once, repeating their cries of "Down with the tyrant! the spoiler!" &c. But this was much easier said than done. Willie instantly retreated before his enemies. But it was by no means from fear. He was practising a very ingenious *ruse;* and it was one that he brought to a very successful issue. He retired from his assailants in order to separate them; and, having succeeded in this, he suddenly turned round, and, before the man who was nearest him was aware of his intention, ran him through the body. Having accomplished this dexterous feat, which he did quick as thought, he continued his flight until another had got considerably in advance of his companions, when he repeated the experiment, but this time by striking a desperate back blow with his sword, which, taking full effect on the face of his pursuer, inflicted a hideous wound that instantly disabled him from all further exertion. The other two, seeing the fate of their associates, and horror-struck with the ghastly appearance of him that was just wounded, lost heart, and fled. But, for one of them at least, this attempt was vain. Willie's blood was now up; and, not content with

what he had already done, he gave chase, shouting out, as he pursued, "Down wi' the tyrant, ye villains! By St. Andrew, we'll see wha'll be doun first! If I dinna gie ye yer kail through the reek, may I never chew cheese again!" And with this—for Willie was as supple of limb, as dexterous and ready of hand—having overtaken the hindmost of the fugitives, he ran the flying ruffian through the back, who instantly fell forward on his face, a dead man. Thinking he had now done enough, and not a little exhaused with the exertions he had made, Willie, allowing the last of his assailants to escape, flung himself on the ground, to recover breath, exclaiming, as he did so, after a long drawn respiration, "Hech, but this has been a deevil o' a teuch job! This kingcraft 'ill never do. Here have I been as near murdered on account o't as ony decent man wad wish to be. I've nae notion o' the tred ava, whar ye're cuttled up ae nicht like a sick wife, wi' the best to eat and drink, and the next to hae yer throat cut. It's no the thing, by ony means."

Such were the reflections in which Willie indulged on this occasion—an occasion which had shown him that the life of a king, as kings and subjects were in Scotland in his time, whatever respect it might procure him, in some instances was one of no small peril. Although, however, he had determined, from the experience which he had just had of the dangers of royalty, to resign the character, and disavow all claims to its dignities very shortly, he yet resolved on going through with it for one day longer—that is, until he had tried what sort of treatment it would procure him at Braehead, whither, the reader will recollect, he was now proceeding on the recommendation of the laird of Whinnyhill.

In this resolution, therefore, he in a few minutes started once more to his feet, and resumed his journey, leaving the dead bodies of the slain where they had fallen; but not, it

must be observed, before he had carefully searched them, to see whether or not there was anything about them to reward him for the trouble of killing them. But in this he was disappointed. On none of them was there anything of the smallest value.

"'Od, ye've been as puir's mysel," he said, on completing his fruitless scrutiny into the pockets of the deceased. "Deil a bodle! No as muckle as wad supper a midge."

Having said this, he rose from the kneeling posture to which his employment had reduced him, and, as we have already said, resumed his march through the Middlemas wood.

Leaving Willie to prosecute his journey, we request the reader to return with us to Whinnyhill, where we shall find a circumstance occurring which is intimately connected with the denouement of our tale.

Shortly after the former's departure from the place just named, another stout carle of a mendicant appeared at the laird's gate. It was the dinner hour, and, as was then customary in the country, and is so still, we believe, in some places, the doors were all carefully secured, and no egress or ingress permitted, till the conclusion of the meal. To this exclusion, however, the person now seeking admission to the laird's did not seem willing to submit; for he began to thunder at the gate with an impetuosity and vehemence that scarcely beseemed his very humble calling; and, as if this was not enough, he shouted out at the top of his voice to the inmates to open the gate to him.

Yet, however unbecoming his conduct, or however insolent it may be thought, it had the desired effect of procuring him the service he wanted.

The laird himself answered the call, though certainly more for the purpose of letting out his wrath on the noisy intruder, than to let him in.

"My feth, friend," he said, his anger greatly increased

when, on opening the gate, he found that it was a common vagrant who sought admittance, "but ye're no blate to rap at folk's doors this gaet. An' ye had been the best man in the land, ye couldna hae been baulder. My certy, it's come to a pretty pass, when beggars bang at yer door like lords!"

"The devil's in the old churl!" replied the undaunted beggar. "Dost not see that I'm knocked up with fatigue, man, and didst think I was to stand here starving of hunger, if a few knocks at your gate was to bring me a little nearer to some refreshment? Come, Whinnyhill," continued the free and easy beggar, at the same time slapping the former familiarly on the shoulder, "I know ye, man, I know ye to be a good honest fellow, and one who grudges nobody either bite or sup. So, let's have something to eat directly." And he bestowed another hearty smack on the laird's shoulder.

"By my feth, sirrah?" replied the latter, amazed and irritated at the singular ease and impudence of the mendicant, and above all at his presumptuous familiarity, "but that's a new way to seek awmous. 'Od, freen, an' ye lack onything, it 'ill no be for want o' askin't."

"Why, Whinnyhill, how should I get, if I didn't ask?" said the mendicant. "Take my word for't, Whinny, when you want a thing there's nothing like asking. Your modest fool always comes off with an empty hand, and maybe an empty stomach too. Why, man, dost think people will run after one offering one what one wants without solicitation? No, no; and, besides, a thing that's worth having is always worth asking."

"Ye're maybe no far wrang there, freend," said the laird; "but ye'll allow me to say that ye're ane o' the bauldest, no to say ane o' the impudentest beggars, I hae seen for a while. Nevertheless, ye may step into the kitchen there, and get a mouthfu' o' what's gaun; but mind ye, dinna

kick up such a stramash at my yett again, when ye come seekin an awmous, or I'll maybe let ye cool your heels awhile or ye win in, and thankfu' if I dinna set the dog on ye."

"The beggar man he thumped at the yett
Till bolt and bar did flee, O,
And aye he swore, as he thumped again,
That denied he wadna be, O.
Fal de ral, al al al, reedle al de ral,
Fal de ral, al al al, de reedle ee di.

"The beggar man he thumped at the yett
Till bolt and bar did flee, O,
When wha should come out but the laird himsel,
And an angry man was he, O.
Fal de ral," &c.

Such was the reply, chaunted with great vociferation and glee, which the sturdy beggar vouchsafed to the laird's more candid than courteous remarks; and it would have been much longer, to the extent probably of a score of verses, had not Whinnyhill impatiently broken in with—

"Wow, man, but ye're an ill-mannered graceless loon as ever I saw atween the twa een. The greatest person in the land, man, is mair humble and respectfu' than you, when he's gaun about the country as ye're doin, and micht weel be an example to you and the like o' you."

"What mean ye, laird?—of whom do ye speak?" said the sturdy beggar, evidently somewhat disconcerted by the former's remark.

"Mean!" replied the laird, sharply—"I mean, sirrah, that the king himsel, when he ca's at ony decent man's house for a nicht's quarters, in his rambles through the country, is far mair civil and discreet than ye are."

"Indeed," said the mendicant. "Dost know the king personally, Whinny? Didst ever see him in the guise thou allud'st to?"

"Wad ye be the better if ye kent?" replied the laird,

angrily; then adding, in better humour, as if recollecting it was something to boast of—"To be sure I do, sirrah! and weel I may, seein that he sleepit here a' last nicht, and's no three hours awa yet."

"What, Whinny!—the king! The king here last night!" exclaimed the mendicant, now exhibiting in his turn, symptoms of surprise and amazement. "Surely you are jesting, laird?"

"Jestin, sir! I'm jestin nane," said Whinnyhill, angrily. "The king *was* here last nicht, sirrah!"

"Impossible, Whinny!"

"Confound ye, sir!—wad ye make me a lecar to my face?"

"Oh, no, no, laird," replied the former, laughing; "but you may be mistaken in your man. At any rate, if it is not impossible, it is certainly odd, Whinny."

"Odd, sir. What's odd about it? Do ye think the king wad think himsel demeaned by takin a nicht's quarters frae me?"

"Nay, nay; not at all—by no means, laird," replied the mendicant eagerly, as if anxious to do away the offensive impression—"by no means. The man would be unworthy of being a king who should think there was any degradation in sitting beneath the roof-tree, and partaking of the hospitality, of an honest and respectable man like you, Whinny. My surprise, laird, was at finding that the king had been here; for I was informed that he was in an entirely different part of the country. Pray, Whinny, what like a fellow was this king you speak of?"

"What like a *fellow*, sir!" replied the laird, in extreme wrath. "My feth, ye're no blate to speak o' yer sovereign in thae disrespectfu' terms. Fellow, in troth! Repeat that word again, sir, in the same breath wi' the king's name, and if I dinna teach ye better manners, blame me! Ye've muckle need o' a lesson, at ony rate."

"Very good, Whinny—very good," said the sturdy beggar, laughing heartily at the angry earnestness of the laird. "I meant no offence, man—none whatever. I've as great a respect for the king as you can possibly have."

"It doesna look like it," interrupted the laird.

"But it is so, nevertheless, I assure you," replied the former; "and I like you all the better, believe me, for your loyalty."

"Ye like me a' the better!" said the laird. "And wha the deil cares whether ye like me or no? By my troth, but ye're very condescendin!"

"Well, well, Whinny," replied the mendicant, again laughing. "But tell me, how did you know the king in his disguise? Are ye sure it was him, after all?"

"Sure enough," said the laird gruffly; "he mair than half confessed it himsel."

"Oh, he did!—then, there can be no doubt of it—none. I should like to see his Majesty, laird. Pray, can you tell me which way he has gone?"

"Ye're very inquisitive, freen," replied the latter; "and to be plain wi' ye, I like neither that nor your familiarity. The king's awa to Braehead—and that's the last ye'll hae frae me; sae step into the kitchen and get a mouthfu', and then tak yersel aff as sune's ye like." And with this the laird was about to walk off, when the mendicant, who continued to stand still where he was, called him back and said—

"Laird, harkee—canst keep a secret?"

"If it's worth keepin, maybe I can."

"Well, then," rejoined the former, "although not very nice in these matters, I'm not altogether reconciled to taking my refection in your kitchen, though, I confess it, most particularly hungry; and therefore ask you what would you think now, if I was the king, and that person, whoever he is, whom you took to be the king, was an impostor?"

"Wow, man, but that's a clumsy trick," replied the laird, chuckling at his own ready sagacity and penetration. "I'm owre far north, lad, to be come owre that way."

"Well, laird," said the mendicant (who—we need conceal the fact no longer from the reader—was indeed no other than James himself), "well, laird," he said, smiling, "I assure you your penetration is at fault this time; for I tell you I am the king, Whinny!"

"And I tell you," replied the laird, "that I dinna believe a word o't; and mair, for your impudence in attempting to impose upon me, ye shanna get bite or sup here this day Tak my word for that."

Dropping here the dialogue, we relate the sequel in simple narrative. It was in vain that James endeavoured to pacify the irritated laird, and to prevail upon him to believe that he really was the king, or to induce him to let him have the refreshment of which he stood so much in need. Obstinate at all times, Whinnyhill was particularly so on this occasion; and not all that the good-humoured monarch could say could move him from his purpose of denying him admittance to his house, or affording him the slightest hospitality.

Finding his efforts in vain, James at length gave up the task as hopeless; but, though not a little disappointed—for he felt both fatigued and hungry—he saw that he could not be displeased, since his churlish treatment by the laird, singularly enough, proceeded from his love and respect for himself. It greatly puzzled James, however, to conceive who it could possibly be that had taken up his incognito (for that some one had done so he felt assured), and seemed so successful in the use of it. The trick was a new one to him, and he could not help being tickled with the ingenuity of the impostor in hitting on so novel an idea. His curiosity, too, to see his rival, was great; so great that, on finding he could make nothing of the laird of Whinnyhill,

he determined on setting out immediately for Braehead, a distance of about six or seven miles, whither he had been told his counterpart had gone; and, acting on this resolution, he started directly for that destination.

On passing through the Middlemass wood, which was the direct and shortest route to the place he was going to, the king's attention was arrested by the dead bodies which Willie had left behind him, and which were still lying as they had fallen.

"Ha!" exclaimed James, suddenly stopping on perceiving them, "what's this? Here has been some lawless work, which I must inquire into when I return to Falkland." A hollow groan at this moment fell on the king's ear, and directed him to the spot, at a little distance, where lay the man who had been so severely wounded on the face by the back stroke of Willie's rapier. King James stooped over the dying man, and inquired who he was, and what was the meaning of the horrid scene around him. The mutilated wretch fixed his glassy and almost sightless eyes on the face of the king, and said, speaking at long intervals, and as distinctly as his little remaining strength would permit.

"I am a dying man, stranger; but I deserve my fate."

"Indeed!" said James—"then thy iniquities must have been great, for thou'rt in very bad case. What hand dealt thee that cruel blow, man?"

"The king's," replied the wounded man.

"The king's!" said James, in astonishment—"what mean ye?"

"I mean," said the dying man, "that it was the king's sword that left me as you now see me. We waylaid him in this wood, expecting he would come this way—and he did, in disguise; but he was too many for us, being armed, which we did not look for."

"And what motive, miserable man," said James, "had you for attacking the king? I'm sure to you, and such as

you, he has ever been a gracious prince. To none but his insolent and tyrannical nobles, who would make slaves of you and a puppet of him, has he ever been accused of severity."

"I acknowledge it," said the dying man. "But we were hired to do the bloody work."

"Ha! hired!" exclaimed James, in alarm! "who hired you? Speak, speak, man—who hired you?"

"That I will not tell," replied the man; "for I've been under obligations to him. But stranger," he continued, "as you would have the blessings of a dying man upon your head, you will—you will"——

Here the speaker seemed on the point of expiring; and the king, perceiving this, and dreading that that event would take place before the dying man could make any further disclosures—

"I will what? I will what?" he said, eagerly and impatiently.

"You will," resumed the wounded man, after a short interval, "repair to Falkland, and tell the king—the king —to beware of—of"——

"Whom, whom, man?" again interrupted James, breathless with the feeling of intense interest that now possessed him—"whom, man, for a thousand pounds!" he exclaimed, forgetting, in his impatience and eager curiosity, his assumed character.

Apparently heedless, however, or unobservant of the questioner's emotion, the dying man at length slowly added, "Of the Earl of Bothwell"—and expired.

"Ha! Bothwell! Bothwell!" repeated James, now falling into a profound reverie; "ay, is he at these pranks? He shall be cared for, however. I warrant he plays no more of them. But it would seem," continued the king, musing, "that this impudent varlet, my counterpart, has stood me in good stead here, and, by mine honour, done me good

service too. Had it not been for him, however unwittingly he may have thus come between me and danger, I must have been slain by these ruffians. I'll forgive the dog his impudence, after all. Nay, he deserves a reward, and he shall have it too." Having said this, or rather thought it, James resumed his journey; and we shall avail ourselves of the opportunity which this circumstance affords, to throw in a word or two, explanatory of the discontented spirit which had led to the attempt on the king's life above spoken of.

James V., it is well known, though an amiable and generous prince, and possessed of many excellent qualities besides, was particularly obnoxious to his nobles, on account of his persevering and successful efforts to restrain and limit the exorbitant power which they had acquired during his minority, and which they showed no disposition to relinquish on his assuming the reins of government.

With this political hostility, as it may be called, to his nobles, James, recollecting what he had suffered from them in his youth, mingled a feeling of bitter personal dislike; and the consequence was, an unrelenting and unremitting course of persecution on the one hand, and of impatient endurance on the other; and the attempt on the king's life, whose consequences our hero, Willie, had so opportunely averted, was one of the ebullitions of that treasonable spirit which this state of matters had engendered.

To return to our tale. Little more than an hour's walking having brought James to Brachead, he entered the house, which was one scene of mirth and festivity from one end to the other; and, uninvited, and, we may add, unopposed too, walked into the kitchen, where a number of country girls and their sweethearts were assembled, to share in the good cheer and jollity of the evening.

On entering the apartment, the king's attention was instantly attracted by a conspicuous figure seated at the

farther end, and very enviably placed between two uncommonly pretty girls, whom he was entertaining with a volubility of tongue and noisy glee that seemed to afford them great delight, and to have carried him far into their good graces. But the influence of the exuberant spirits of this joyous but somewhat obstreperous person, was by no means confined to his two fair supporters. He had, by the time James entered, evidently secured that pre-eminence which belongs to the character usually known by the title of the cock of the company. He was, in short, obviously in undisputed possession of the popular voice; and there was no doubt was considered by every one there as first fiddle of the evening.

This jovial person, we need hardly say, was no other than our friend Willie; and James, as he eyed him, at once guessed that he was the person who had done him the honour of representing him at Whinnyhill.

Satisfied of this, the disguised monarch stole quietly round to where Willie was seated, and whispered in his ear this courteous inquiry—

"I say, friend, who the devil are you?"

"And, I say," exclaimed Willie, looking hard at the querist, and by no means making any secret of his inquiry —"Wha the deevil are ye?"

"Just what you see me," replied James—"going about the country seeking a living wherever I think it likely I may pick it up."

"Nae harm in that ava, freen," said Willie. "Puir bodies maun leeve some way or anither. They're no gaun to die at a dike side if they can get a mouthfu' for the askin."

"Surely not, surely not, friend," replied James. "But, I say," he added—and now drawing Willie close to him, in order that the communication he was about to make might be inaudible to those beside him—"do you think I

don't know you, sir, notwithstanding your disguise? If you do, you are mistaken. I know you well, sir. You are the king!"

"And what though I be, sir?" said Willie, boldly, but secretly surprised to find royalty thus again thrust upon him. "What's that to you? But, I say," he added, and now whispering in his turn, "as ye value yer head, mum's the word aboot that 'enow; for I'm in very guid quarters whar I am, and hae nae wish to gang amang the gentry. Sae keep a calm sough aboot it, or ye may fare the waur."

"Nay, nay, now," replied James; "I really cannot endure to see my sovereign in such an humble situation as this—a situation so unworthy of his dignity. It is unseemly and painful to behold. I will not endure it!"

"But it is my pleasure, sirrah," said Willie, angrily and impatiently—"and that's aneuch. Sae, mak nor meddle nae mair wi't, or ye'll maybe rue't. Do ye think I want to mak a spectacle o' mysel?"

"Excuse me; but positively, sir, I must insist on your being treated with more respect. I must inform the laird of your being here." And, without waiting for any farther remonstrances on the subject from Willie, or paying any attention to his anxious calls to him to return, the disguised monarch hurried out of the apartment, and desired one of the servants of the house to inform his master that a person wished to speak to him on important business, and that he would find him in front of the house.

Having dispatched this business, James walked out, and, at a little distance, awaited the laird's appearance. On his approach—"Well, laird," said the King, "dost know me? I think thou should'st. We have seen each other before."

The person thus addressed looked silently and earnestly for some time at the disguised monarch, as if perplexed by the question; but at length eagerly and joyously exclaimed,

at the same time doffing his cap or bonnet with the most profound respect—

"I do, sir—I do. You are the king!"

"Hush, hush," said James. "Not a word of that just now. My crown's in danger, laird. There's a rival near my throne. Dost know, laird, that there's another king in your kitchen at this moment?"

"You are pleased to be merry, sire. Pray, what does your Majesty mean?" replied the laird, smiling, yet evidently at a loss to comprehend the joke.

"Why, I mean precisely what I have said, laird. There is, I repeat it, another king in your kitchen just now; and a rattling, stalwarth looking fellow he is, with a couple of very pretty girls, one on each side of him. But here is the truth of the matter, laird," continued the king, compassionating the former's perplexity—"here's a fellow, at this moment, in your kitchen, who has taken it upon him to assume my incognito, and has, in this character, already imposed upon Whinnyhill."

The "knave!" exclaimed the laird. "We must have him instantly hanged."

"Nay, nay—not so fast, laird. The fellow deserves a fright, and he shall have it; but he has done me good service, though unwittingly, and I must forgive him." And James here proceeded to relate the adventure in the Middlemass wood, which is already before the reader.

When he had done. "Now, laird," he said, "we shall have some amusement with the rogue. You shall wait on him; and, professing to take him for what he represents himself to be, respectfully invite him, nay, insist on him joining you and your friends at your own table; for I rather think he'll flinch it if he can; and I shall, by-and-by, send in a messenger to announce my arrival, and to seek admittance; and we shall then see how the rogue looks."

The laird, who was himself a bit of a humourist, readily entered into the spirit of the jest, and immediately set about its execution. Proceeding to the kitchen, he walked up, hat in hand, to where Willie was seated between his two doxies; and standing respectfully before him, informed him that, from some intelligence he had just received from Whinnyhill, he had come to solicit his illustrious guest to accompany him to a place more befitting his dignity, though still far from being worthy of it.

"Why, laird," replied Willie, after his best manner, "I thank ye; but, to tell you a truth, I'd rather remain where I am. I'm amazingly well here, and cannot think of leaving these twa bonny lasses." And here the gallant harper chucked the girls under the chin.

"Nay, excuse me," said the laird, bowing low; "but I must insist on your accompanying me. I will explain myself farther when we get to a more fitting place."

"Why, if you do insist, laird," said Willie, "I really do not see that I can refuse you." And with this he arose, though with evident reluctance, from his seat; and, after comforting his fair companions with an assurance that he would rejoin them as soon as he could, followed the guidance of his host. This conducted him into an apartment where were a number of people assembled round a well-stored table, in the full career of social enjoyment. Willie by no means relished this display of company, as it greatly increased the chances of detection; but he resolved to brave it out the best way he could.

On his entrance, the party, to all of whom the hint had been given of what was going forward, rose to their feet, and stood respectfully till Willie was fairly planted in a large arm-chair at the head of the table, when they resumed their seats. Every degree of respect and attention was now shown to the mock king which could have

been bestowed upon the real one—with this exception, that he was plied with fully more liquor than it would have been altogether becoming to have pressed upon an anointed sovereign. In this, however, Willie himself saw nothing derogatory, and therefore continued to swallow all that was offered him, till he got, as was usual to him in such cases, into most exuberant spirits, when he began to entertain the company with some of his choicest songs and stories, and with the usual effect of "setting the table in a roar." Willie was, in short, in a fair way of becoming, if not king of Scotland, at least king of the company; and had attained about mid career in his bright track of jollification, when a messenger entered, and informed the master of the house that a person desired to see him on business of importance. The laird, instantly obeying the summons, withdrew. In a few minutes, however, he returned; and, with an air of surprise and perplexity, said, addressing the company, but more particularly Willie—"Gentlemen, here is a very strange matter. Here has a person arrived at my house, who insists on it that he is the king, and demands admittance."

"Admittance!" roared out Willie, evidently a good deal discomposed by the communication—"on no account admit him, laird. Tie the impostor neck and heel, and throw him into the nearest burn! Pack him off instantly."

"Nay, nay, sir," replied the laird; "I think we had better admit him, and leave it to you and him to decide which of you has the best claim to the dignity." And before Willie could make any farther objection, James himself was ushered into the apartment.

On his entrance—

"Where," he exclaimed, with a fierce frown—"where is the impudent varlet that has been imposing on the credulity of my subjects, by assuming my incognito? Art

thou the knave?" he immediately added; and now addressing Willie, who, completely crestfallen, was looking at him with the most rueful expression of countenance imaginable.

"And if I am, man," said Willie, in a piteous tone, in reply to this home charge, "ye needna mak sic a stramash aboot it, nor look sae dooms angry either. I'm sure yer royalty's no a whit the waur o' me haen't on for a wee bit; and, guid kens, ye're welcome till't back again, for it doesna fit me. Sae tak it, sir, and muckle guid may't do ye!"

Here James could contain his gravity no longer, but burst into a loud laugh. "And what, you knave," he said, "put it into your head to practise this imposition? You have fairly deceived Whinnyhill."

"The ne'er a bit o' me did that, sir," said Willie, now somewhat relieved of his fears, by the king's good humour. "He deceived himsel," And here Willie related, to the great amusement of James, the conversation which he had overheard between the laird of Whinnyhill and his wife; and concluded with, "So ye see, sir, he made me a king whether I wad or no; and, as he put on the coat, I just wore't, although it was like to cost me dear aneuch in the Middlemass wood."

"I've heard of that too, sirrah," replied the king, again laughing; "and it is for the good service thou didst me there, that I now feel disposed not to hang you."

"That's an ugly word, sir."

"Go to, go to, you knave!" said the good-humoured monarch, smiling; and, at the same time, drawing forth a well-filled purse from beneath his outer garment, and thereafter throwing it towards Willie—"There, sirrah, take that, and get thee gone; but mark me, my royal brother, see thou dost not try this prank again, else your

quarrel and mine may be a more serious one than it has been on this occasion."

Glad to get off on such favourable terms, Willie sneaked out of the apartment without making any further remarks; and next day set out on his return to his native district, forswearing kingcraft and the kingdom of Fife for ever.

BILL WHYTE.

I HAD occasion, about three years ago, to visit the ancient burgh of Fortrose. It was early in winter, the days were brief though pleasant, and the nights long and dark; and, as there is much in Fortrose which the curious traveller deems interesting, I had lingered amid its burying-grounds and its broken and mouldering tenements, till the twilight had fairly set in. I had explored the dilapidated ruins of the Chanonry of Ross; seen the tomb of old Abbot Boniface, and the bell blessed by the pope; run over the complicated tracery of the Runic obelisk which had been dug up, about sixteen years before, from under the foundations of the old parish church; and visited the low, long house, with its upper windows buried in the thatch, in which the far-famed Sir James Mackintosh had received the first rudiments of his education. And, in all this, I had been accompanied by a benevolent old man of the place, a mighty chronicler of the past, who, when a boy, had sat on the same form with Sir James, and who, on this occasion, had seemed quite as delighted in meeting with a patient and interested listener, as I had been in finding so intelligent and enthusiastic a storiest. There was little wonder, then, that twilight should have overtaken me in such a place, and in such company.

There are two roads which run between Cromarty and Fortrose; the one, the king's highway; the other, a narrow footpath that goes winding for several miles under the immense wall of cliffs which overhangs the northern shores of the Moray Frith, and then ascends to the top, by narrow and doubtful traverses along the face of an immense pre-

cipice, termed the Scarf's Crag. The latter route is by far the more direct and more pleasant of the two to the day traveller; but the man should think twice who proposes taking it by night. The Scarf's Crag has been a scene of frightful accidents for the last two centuries. It is not yet more than twelve years since a young and very active man was precipitated from one of its higher ledges to the very beach—a sheer descent of nearly two hundred feet; and a multitude of little cairns which mottle the sandy platform below, bear witness to the no unfrequent occurrence of such causalties in the remote past. With the knowledge of all this, however, I had determined on taking the more perilous road: it is fully two miles shorter than the other; and besides, in a life of undisturbed security, a slight admixture of that feeling which the sense of danger awakens, is a luxury which I have always deemed worth one's while running some little risk to procure. The night fell thick and dark while I was yet hurrying along the footway which leads under the cliffs, and, on reaching the Scarf's Crag, I could no longer distinguish the path, nor even catch the huge outline of the precipice between me and the sky. I knew that the moon rose a little after nine; but it was still early in the evening, and, deeming it too long to wait its rising, I set myself to grope for the path, when, on turning an abrupt angle, I was dazzled by a sudden blaze of light from an opening in the rock. A large fire of furze and brushwood blazed merrily from the interior of a low-browed but spacious cave, bronzing with dusky yellow the huge volume of smoke, which went rolling outwards along the roof, and falling red and strong on the face and hands of a thickset, determined-looking man, well nigh in his sixtieth year, who was seated before it on a block of stone. I knew him at once, as an intelligent, and, in the main, rather respectable gipsy, whom I had once met with, about ten years before, and who had seen some service as a soldier,

it was said, in the first British expedition to Egypt. The sight of his fire determined me at once. I resolved on passing the evening with him till the rising of the moon; and, after a brief explanation, and a blunt, though by no means unkind invitation to a place beside his fire, I took my seat, fronting him, on a block of granite, which had been rolled from the neighbouring beach. In less than half-an-hour, we were on as easy terms as if we had been comrades for years, and, after beating over fifty different topics, he told me the story of his life, and found an attentive and interested auditor.

Who of all my readers is unacquainted with Goldsmith's admirable stories of the sailor with the wooden leg, and the poor half-starved Merry-Andrew! Independently of the exquisite humour of the writer, they are suited to interest us from the sort of cross vistas which they open into scenes of life, where every thought, and aim, and incident, has at once all the freshness of novelty and all the truth of nature to recommend it. And I felt nearly the same kind of interest in listening to the narrative of the gipsy. It was much longer than either of Goldsmith's stories, and perhaps less characteristic; but it presented a rather curious picture of a superior nature rising to its proper level through circumstances the most adverse; and, in the main, pleased me so well, that I think I cannot do better than present it to the reader.

"I was born, master," said the gipsy, "in this very cave, some sixty years ago, and so am a Scotchman like yourself. My mother, however, belonged to the Debatable-land, my father was an Englishman, and of my five sisters, one first saw the light in Jersey, another in Guernsey, a third in Wales, a fourth in Ireland, and the fifth in the Isle of Man. But this is a trifle, master, to what occurs in some families. It can't be now much less than fifty years since my mother left us, one bright sunny day, on the English side of Kelso,

and staid away about a week. We thought we had lost her altogether; but back she came at last, and, when she did come, she brought with her a small sprig of a lad, of about three summers or thereby. Father grumbled a little —we had got small fry enough already, he said, and bare enough and hungry enough they were at times; but mother shewed him a pouch of yellow pieces, and there was no more grumbling. And so we called the little fellow, Bill Whyte, as if he had been one of ourselves, and he grew up among us, as pretty a fellow as e'er the sun looked upon. I was a few years his senior; but he soon contrived to get half a foot a-head of me; and, when we quarrelled, as boys will at times, master, I always came off second best. I never knew a fellow of a higher spirit; he would rather starve than beg, a hundred times over, and never stole in his life; but then for gin-setting, and deer-stalking, and black-fishing, not a poacher in the country got beyond him; and when there was a smuggler in the Solway, who more active than Bill? He was barely nineteen, poor fellow, when he made the country too hot to hold him. I remember the night as well as if it were yesterday. The Catmaran lugger was in the Frith, d'ye see, a little below Carlaverock; and father and Bill, and some half dozen more of our men, were busy in bumping the kegs ashore, and hiding them in the sand. It was a thick smuggy night; we could hardly see fifty yards round us; and, on our last trip, master, when we were down in the water to the gunwale, who should come upon us, in the turning of a handspike, but the revenue lads from Kirkcudbright! They hailed us to strike in the devil's name. Bill swore he wouldn't. Flash went a musket, and the ball whistled through his bonnet. Well, he called on them to row up, and up they came; but no sooner were they within half-oar's length, than taking up a keg, and raising it just as he used to do the putting-stone, he made it spin through their

bottom, as if the planks were of window glass; and down went their cutter in half a jiffy. They had wet powder that night, and fired no more bullets. Well, when they were gathering themselves up as they best could—and, goodness he praised! there were no drownings amongst them—we bumped our kegs ashore, hiding them with the others, and then fled up the country. We knew there would be news of our night's work; and so there was; for, before next evening, there were advertisements on every post for the apprehension of Bill, with an offered reward of twenty pounds.

Bill was a bit of a scholar—so am I for that matter—and the papers stared him on every side.

"Jack," he said to me, "Jack Whyte, this will never do the law's too strong for us now; and, if I dont make away with myself, they'll either have me tucked up, or sent over seas to slave for life. I'll tell you what I'll do. I stand six feet in my stocking soles, and good men were never more wanted than at present. I'll cross the country this very night, and away to Edinburgh, where there are troops raising for foreign service. Better a musket than the gallows!"

"Well, Bill," I said, "I dont care though I go with you. I'm a good enough man for my inches, though I aint so tall as you, and I'm woundily tired of spoon-making."

And so off we set across the country that very minute, travelling by night only, and passing our days in any hiding hole we could find, till we reached Edinburgh, and there took the bounty. Bill made as pretty a soldier as one could have seen in a regiment; and, men being scarce, I wasn't rejected neither; and, after just three weeks' drilling—and plaguy weeks they were—we were shipped off, fully finished, for the south. Bonaparty had gone to Egypt, and we were sent after him to ferret him out; though we weren't told so at the time. And it was our good luck, master, to be put aboard of the same transport.

Nothing like seeing the world for making a man smart. We had all sort of people in our regiment—from the broken-down gentleman to the broken-down lamp lighter; and Bill was catching, from the best of them all he could. He knew he wasn't a gipsy, and had always an eye to getting on in the world; and, as the voyage was a woundy long one, and we had the regimental schoolmaster aboard, Bill was a smarter fellow at the end of it than he had been at the beginning. Well, we reached Aboukir Bay at last. You have never been in Egypt, master; but, just look across the Moray Frith here, on a sunshiny day, and you will see a picture of it, if you but strike off the blue Highland hills that rise behind, from the long range of low sandy hillocks that stretches away along the coast, between Findhorn and Nairn. I don't think it was worth all the trouble it cost us; but the king surely knew best. Bill and I were in the first detachment, and we had to clear the way for the rest. The French were drawn up on the shore, as thick as flies on a dead snake, and the bullets rattled round us like a shower of May-hail. It was a glorious sight, master, for a bold heart! The entire line of sandy coast seemed one unbroken streak of fire and smoke; and we could see the old tower of Aboukir, rising like a fiery dragon at the one end, and the straggling village of Rosetta, half cloud, half flame, stretching away on the other. There was a line of launches and gun-boats behind us, that kept up an incessant fire on the enemy, and shot and shell went booming over our heads. We rowed shorewards, under a canopy of smoke and flame; the water was broken by ten thousand oars; and, never, master, have you heard such cheering; it drowned the roar of the very cannon. Bill and I pulled at the same oar; but he bade me cheer, and leave the pulling to him.

"Cheer, Jack," he said, "Cheer!—I am strong enough to pull ten oars, and your cheering does my heart good."

I could see, in the smoke and the confusion, that there was a boat stove by a shell just beside us, and the man immediately behind me was shot through the head. But we just cheered and pulled all the harder; and the moment our keel touched the shore, we leaped out into the water, middle deep, and, after one well directed volley, charged up the beach with our bayonets fixed. I missed footing in the hurry, just as we closed, and a big whiskered fellow in blue, would have pinned me to the sand, had not Bill struck him through the wind-pipe, and down he fell above me; but when I strove to rise from under him, he grappled with me in his death agony, and the blood and breath came rushing through his wound in my face. Ere I had thrown him off, my comrades had broken the enemy, and were charging up the side of a sand hill, where there were two field-pieces stationed that had sadly annoyed us in the landing. There came a shower of grape shot, whistling round me, that carried away my canteen, and turned me half round; and when I looked up, I saw, through the smoke, that half my comrades were swept away by the discharge, and that the survivors were fighting desperately over the two guns, hand to hand with the enemy. Ere I got up to them, however—and trust me, master, I did'nt linger—the guns were our own. Bill stood beside one of them, all grim and bloody, with his bayonet dripping like an eaves-spout in a shower. He had struck down five of the French, besides the one he had levelled over me; and now, all of his own accord—for our sergeant had been killed—he had shotted the two pieces, and turned them on the enemy. They all scampered down the hill, master, on the first discharge—all save one brave, obstinate fellow, who stood firing upon us, not fifty yards away, half under cover of a sand-bank. I saw him load thrice ere I could hit him, and one of his balls whisked through my hat; but I catched him at last, and down he fell—my bullet went

right through his forehead. We had no more fighting that day. The French fell back on Alexandria, and our troops advanced about three miles into the country, over a dreary waste of sand, and then lay for the night on their arms.

In the morning, when we were engaged in cooking our breakfasts, master, making what fires we could with the withered leaves of the date-tree, our colonel and two officers came up to us. The colonel was an Englishman—as brave a gentleman as ever lived—ay, and as kind an officer, too. He was a fine-looking old man, as tall as Bill, and as well built, too; but his health was much broken; it was said he had entered the army out of break-heart on losing his wife. Well, he came up to us, and shook Bill by the hand, as cordially as if he had been a colonel like himself. He was a brave, good soldier, he said, and, to show him how much he valued good men, he had come to make him a sergeant, in room of the one we had lost. He had heard he was a scholar, he said, and he trusted his conduct would not disgrace the halberd. Bill, you may be sure, thanked the colonel, and thanked him, master, very like a gentleman; and, that very day, he swaggered scarlet and a sword, as pretty a sergeant as the army could boast of—ay, and for that matter, though his experience was little, as fit for his place.

For the first fortnight, we didn't eat the king's biscuit for nothing. We had terrible hard fighting on the 13th; and, had not our ammunition failed us, we would have beaten the enemy all to rags; but, for the last two hours, we hadn't a shot, and stood just like so many targets set up to be fired at. I was never more vexed in my life, than when I saw my comrades falling round me; and all for nothing. Not only could I see them falling; but in the absence of every other noise—for we had ceased to cheer, and stood as silent and as hard as foxes—I could hear the

dull, hollow sound of the shot, as it pierced them through. Sometimes the bullets struck the sand, and then rose and went rolling over the level, raising clouds of dust at every skip. At times, we could see them coming through the air like little clouds, and singing all the way as they came. But it was the frightful smoking shot that annoyed us most; these horrid shells. Sometimes, they broke over our heads in the air, as if a cannon charged with grape had been fired at us from out the clouds; at times, they sank into the sand at our feet, and then burst up like so many Vesuviuses, giving at once death and burial to hundreds. But we stood our ground, and the day passed. I remember we got, towards evening, into a snug hollow between two sand-hills, where the shot skimmed over us, not two feet above our heads; but two feet is just as good as twenty, master; and I began to think, for the first time, that I hadn't got a smoke all day. I snapped my musket, and lighted my pipe, and Bill, whom I hadn't seen since the day after the landing, came up to share with me.

"Bad day's work, Jack," he said; "But we have at least taught the enemy what British soldiers can endure, and, ere long, we shall teach them something more. But here comes a shell! Nay, do not move," he said; "it will fall just ten yards short." And down it came, roaring like a tempest, sure enough, about ten yards away, and sank into the sand. "There now, fairly lodged," said Bill; "lie down, lads, lie down." We threw ourselves flat on our faces—the earth heaved under us, like a wave of the sea, and, in a moment, Bill and I were covered with half a ton of sand. But the pieces whizzed over us; and, save that the man who was across me had an ammunition bag carried away, not one of us more than heard them. On getting ourselves disinterred, and our pipes relighted, Bill, with a twitch on the elbow—so—said he wished to speak with me apart; and we went out together, into a hollow, in front.

"You will think it strange, Jack," he said, "that, all this day, when the enemy's bullets were hopping around us like hail, there was but just one idea that filled my mind, and I could find room for no other. Ever since I saw Colonel Westhope it has been forced upon me, through a newly-awakened dream-like recollection, that he is the gentleman with whom I lived ere I was taken away by your people; for, taken away I must have been. Your mother used to tell me, that my father was a Cumberland gipsy, who met with some bad accident from the law; but I am now convinced she must have deceived me, and that my father was no such sort of man. You will think it strange; but, when putting on my coat this morning, my eye caught the silver bar on the sleeve, and there leaped into my mind a vivid recollection of having worn a scarlet dress before—scarlet bound with silver; and that it was in the house of a gentleman and lady, whom I had just learned to call papa and mamma. And every time I see the colonel, as I say, I am reminded of the gentleman. Now, for heaven's sake, Jack, tell me all you know about me. You are a few years my senior, and must remember better than I can myself, under what circumstances I joined your tribe."

"Why Bill," I said, "I know little of the matter, and, 'twere no great wonder though these bullets should confuse me somewhat in recalling what I do know. Most certainly we never thought you a gipsy like ourselves; but then I am sure mother never stole you; she had family enough of her own, and, besides, she brought with her, for your board, she said, a purse with more gold in it than I have seen at one time, either before or since. I remember it kept us all comfortably in the *creature* for a whole twelve-month; and it wasn't a trifle, Bill, that could do that. You were at first like to die among us. You hadn't been accustomed to sleeping out, or to food such as ours. And, dear me! how the rags you were dressed in used to annoy

you; but you soon got over all, Bill, and became the hardiest little fellow among us. I once heard my mother say that you were a *love-begot*, and that your father, who was an English gentleman, had to part from both you and your mother on taking a wife. And no more can I tell you, Bill, for the life of me."

We slept that night on the sand, master, and found, in the morning, that the enemy had fallen back some miles nearer Alexandria. Next evening there was a party of us dispatched on some secret service across the desert. Bill was with us; but the officer under whose special charge we were placed was a Captain Turpie, a nephew of Colonel Westhope, and his heir. But he heired few of his good qualities. He was the son of a pettifogging lawyer, and was as heartily hated by the soldiers as the colonel was beloved. Towards sunset, the party reached a hollow valley in the waste, and there rested, preparatory, as we all intended, for passing the night. Some of us were engaged in erecting temporary huts of branches, some in providing the necessary materials, and we had just formed a snug little camp, and were preparing to light our fires for supper, when we heard a shot not two furlongs away. Bill, who was by far the most active among us, sprung up one of the tallest date-trees, to reconnoitre. But he soon came down again.

"We have lost our pains this time," he said; "there is a party of French, of fully five times our number, not half a mile away." The captain on the news, wasn't slow, as you may think, in ordering us off; and, hastily gathering up our blankets, and the contents of our knapsacks, we struck across the sand just as the sun was setting. There is scarce any twilight in Egypt, master; it is pitch dark twenty minutes after sunset. The first part of the evening, too, is infinitely disagreable. The days are burning hot, and not a cloud can be seen in the sky; but no sooner has the sun

gone down, than there comes on a thick white fog, that covers the whole country, so that one can't see fifty yards around; and so icy cold is it, that it strikes a chill to the very heart. It is with these fogs that the dews descend; and deadly things they are. Well, the mist and the darkness came upon us at once; we lost all reckoning; and, after floundering on for an hour or so, among the sandhills, our captain called a halt, and bade us burrow as we best might among the hollows. Hungry as we were, we were fain to leave our supper, to begin the morning with, and huddled all together into what seemed a deep, dry, ditch. We were at first surprised, master, to find an immense heap of stone under us; we couldn't have lain harder had we lain on a Scotch cairn; and that, d'ye see, is unusual in Egypt, where all the sand has been blown by the hot winds from the desert, hundreds of miles away, and where, in the course of a few days' journey, one mayn't see a pebble larger than a pigeon's egg. There were hard, round, bullet-like masses under us, and others of a more oblong shape, like pieces of wood that had been cut for fuel; and, tired as we were, their sharp points, protruding through the sand, kept most of us from sleep. But that was little, master, to what we felt afterwards. As we began to take heat together, there broke out among us a most disagreeable stench; bad, at first, and unlike anything I had ever felt before, but at last altogether overpowering. Some of us became dead sick, and some, to show how much bolder they were than the rest, began to sing. One half the party stole away one by one, and lay down outside; for my own part, master, I thought it was the plague that was breaking out upon us from below, and lay still, in despair of escaping it. I was wretchedly tired, too, and, despite of my fears and the stench, I fell asleep, and slept till daylight. But never before, master, did I see such a sight as when I awoke. We had been sleeping on the carcases of ten thousand Turks,

whom Bonaparty had massacred about a twelvemonth before. There were eyeless skulls grinning at us by hundreds from the side of the ditch, and black, withered hands and feet sticking out, with the white bones glittering between the shrunken sinews. The very sand, for roods around, had a brown iron-like tinge, and seemed baked into a half-solid mass, resembling clay. It was no place to loiter in; and you may trust me, master, we breakfasted elsewhere. Bill kept close to our captain all that morning; he didn't much like him, even so early in their acquaintance as this—no one did, in fact; but he was anxious to learn from him all he could regarding the colonel. He told him, too, something about his own early recollections; but he would better have kept them to himself. From that hour, master, Captain Turpic never gave him a pleasant look, and sought every means to ruin him.

We joined the army again on the evening of the 20th March. You know, master, what awaited us next morning. I had been marching, on the day of our arrival, for twelve hours, under a very hot sun, and was fatigued enough to sleep soundly. But the dead might have awakened next morning. The enemy broke in upon us about three o'clock. It was pitch dark. I had been dreaming, at the moment, that I was busily engaged in the landing, fighting in the front rank beside Bill, and I awoke to hear the enemy, outside the tent, struggling in fierce conflict with such of my comrades as, half-naked and half-armed, had been roused by the first alarm, and had rushed out to oppose them. You will not think I was long in joining them, master, when I tell you that Bill himself was hardly two steps a-head of me. Colonel Westhope was everywhere at once that morning, bringing his men in the darkness and the confusion, into something like order; threatening, encouraging, applauding, issuing orders—all in a breath. Just as we got out, the French broke through, beside our

tent, and we saw him struck down in the throng. Bill gave a tremendous cry of 'Our colonel! our colonel!' and struck his pike up to the cross into the breast of the fellow who had given the blow. And, hardly had that one fallen, than he sent it crashing through the face of the next foremost, till it lay buried in the brain. The enemy gave back for a moment; and, as he was striking down a third, the colonel got up, badly wounded in the shoulder; but he kept the field all day. He knew Bill the moment he rose, and leant on him till he had somewhat recovered. 'I shall not forget, Bill,' he said, 'that you have saved your colonel's life.' We had a fierce struggle, master, ere we beat out the French; but, broken and half-naked as we were, we did beat them out, and the battle became general.

At first, the flare of the artillery, as the batteries blazed out in the darkness, dazzled and blinded me; but I loaded and fired incessantly; and the thicker the bullets went whistling past me, the faster I loaded and fired. A spent shot, that had struck through a sandbank, came rolling on like a bowl, and, leaping up from a hillock in front, struck me on the breast. It was such a blow, master, as a man might have given with his fist; but it knocked me down; and, ere I got up, the company was a few paces in advance. The bonnet of the soldier who had taken my place, came rolling to my feet ere I could join them. But, alas! it was full of blood and brains; and I found that the spent shot had come just in time to save my life. Meanwhile, the battle raged with redoubled fury on the left, and we in the centre had a short respite. And some of us needed it. For my own part, I had fired about a hundred rounds; and my right shoulder was as blue as your waistcoat.

You will wonder, master, how I should notice such a thing in the heat of an engagement; but I remember nothing better than that there was a flock of little birds shrieking and fluttering over our heads for the greater

part of the morning. The poor little things seemed as if robbed of their very instinct by the incessant discharges on every side of them; and, instead of pursuing a direct course, which would soon have carried them clear of us, they kept fluttering in helpless terror in one little spot. About mid-day an *aide-de-camp* went riding by us to the right.

'How goes it? how goes it?' asked one of our officers.

'It is just *who will*,' replied the *aide-de-camp*, and passed by like lightning. Another followed hard after him.

'How goes it now?' inquired the officer.

'Never better, boy!' said the second rider. 'The Forty-Second have cut Bonaparty's Invincibles to pieces, and all the rest of the enemy are falling back!'

We came more into action a little after. The enemy opened a heavy fire on us, and seemed advancing to the charge. I had felt so fatigued, master, during the previous pause, that I could scarcely raise my hand to my head; but, now that we were to be engaged again, all my fatigue left me, and I found myself grown fresh as ever. There were two field-pieces to our left that had done noble execution during the day; and Captain Turpic's company, including Bill and me, were ordered to stand by them in the expected charge. They were wrought mostly by seamen from the vessels—brave, tight fellows, who, like Nelson, never saw fear; but they had been so busy that they had shot away most of their ammunition; and, as we came up to them, they were about despatching a party to the rear for more.

'Right,' said Captain Turpic; 'I don't care though I lend you a hand, and go with you.'

'On your peril, sir!' said Bill Whyte, 'What! leave your company in the moment of the expected charge? I shall assuredly report you for cowardice and desertion of quarters, if you do.'

'And I shall have you broke for mutiny,' said the captain. 'How can these fellows know how to choose their ammunition without some one to direct them?'

And so off he went to the rear, with the sailors; but, though they returned, poor fellows! in ten minutes or so, we saw no more of the captain till evening. On came the French in their last charge. Ere they could close with us, the sailors had fired their field-pieces thrice; and we could see wide avenues opened among them with each discharge. But on they came. Our bayonets crossed and clashed with theirs for one half minute; and, in the next, they were hurled headlong down the declivity, and we were fighting among them pell-mell. There are few troops superior to the French, master, in a first attack; but they want the bottom of the British; and, now that we had broken them in the moment of their onset, they had no chance with us, and we pitched our bayonets into them as if they were so many sheaves in harvest. They lay in some places three and four tier deep—for our blood was up, master,—just as they advanced on us, we had heard of the death of our general; and they neither asked for quarter nor got it. Ah, the good and gallant Sir Ralph! We all felt as if we had lost a father; but he died as the brave best love to die. The field was all our own; and not a Frenchman remained who was not dead or dying. That action, master, fairly broke the neck of their power in Egypt.

Our colonel was severely wounded, as I have told you, early in the morning; but, though often enough urged to retire, he had held out all day, and had issued his orders with all the coolness and decision for which he was so remarkable; but, now that the excitement of the fight was over, his strength failed him at once, and he had to be carried to his tent. He called for Bill, to assist in bearing him off. I believe it was merely that he might

have an opportunity of speaking to him. He told him that, whether he died or lived, he would take care that he should be provided for. He gave Captain Turpic charge, too, that he should keep a warm side to Bill. I overheard our major say to the captain, as we left the tent —'Good heavens! did you ever see two men liker one another than the colonel and our new sergeant?' But the captain carelessly remarked, that the resemblance didn't strike him.

We met, outside, with a comrade. He had had a cousin in the Forty-Second, he said, who had been killed that morning, and he was anxious to see the body decently burried, and wished us to go along with him. And so we both went. It is nothing, master, to see men struck down in warm blood, and when one's own blood is up; but oh, 'tis a grievous thing, after one has cooled down to one's ordinary mood, to go out among the dead and the dying. We passed through what had been the thick of the battle. The slain lay in hundreds and thousands—like the ware and tangle on the shore below us—horribly broken, some of them, by the shot; and blood and brains lay spattered on the sand. But it was a worse sight to see, when some poor wretch, who had no chance of living an hour longer, opened his eyes as we passed, and cried out for water. We soon emptied our canteens, and then had to pass on. In no place did the dead lie thicker than where the Forty-Second had engaged the Invincibles; and never were there finer fellows. They lay piled in heaps—the best men of Scotland over the best men of France—and their wounds, and their number, and the postures in which they lay, showed how tremendous the struggle had been. I saw one gigantic corpse, with the head and neck cloven through the steel cab to the very brisket. It was that of a Frenchman; but the hand that had drawn the blow, lay cold and stiff, not a yard away, with the

broadsword still firm in its grasp. A little farther on, we found the body we sought. It was that of a fair young man; the features were as composed as if he were asleep; there was even a smile on the lips; but a cruel cannon shot had torn the very heart out of the breast. Evening was falling. There was a little dog whining and whimpering over the body, aware, it would seem, that some great ill had befallen its master; but yet tugging, from time to time, at his clothes, that he might rise and come away.

'Ochon, ochon! poor Evan M'Donald!' exclaimed our comrade; 'what would Christy Ross, or your good old mother, say to see you lying here!'

Bill burst out a-crying, as if he had been a child; and I couldn't keep dry-eyed neither, master. But grief and pity are weaknesses of the bravest natures. We scooped out a hole in the sand with our bayonets and our hands, and, burying the body, came away.

The battle of the 21st broke, as I have said, the strength of the French in Egypt; for, though they didn't surrender to us until about five months after, they kept snug behind their walls, and we saw little more of them. Our colonel had gone aboard of the frigate, desperately ill of his wounds —so ill that it was several times reported he was dead; and most of our men were suffering sadly from sore eyes ashore. But such of us as escaped, had little to do, and we contrived to wile away the time agreeably enough. Strange country, Egypt, master. You know, our people have come from there; but, trust me, I could find none of my cousins among either the Turks or the Arabs. The Arabs, master, are quite the gipsies of Egypt: and Bill and I—but he paid dearly for them afterwards, poor fellow —used frequently to visit such of their straggling tribes as came to the neighbourhood of our camp. You, and the like of you, master, are curious to see *our* people, and

how we get on—and no wonder; and we were just as curious to see the Arabs. Toward evening, they used to come in from the shore or the desert, in parties of ten or twelve; and wild-looking fellows they were; tall, but not very tall; thin, and skinny, and dark; and an amazing proportion of them blind of an eye—an effect, I suppose, of the disease from which our comrades were suffering so much. In a party of ten or twelve—and their parties rarely exceeded a dozen—we found that every one of them had some special office to perform. One carried a fishing net, like a herring have; one, perhaps, a basket of fish, newly caught; one a sheaf of wheat; one, a large copper basin, or rather platter; one, a bundle of the dead boughs and leaves of the date tree; one, the implements for lighting a fire; and so on. The first thing they always did, after squatting down in a circle, was to strike a light; the next, to dig a round pot-like hole in the sand, in which they kindle their fire. When the sand has become sufficiently hot, they throw out the embers, and, placing the fish, just as they had caught them, in the bottom of the hole, heaped the hot sand over them, and the fire over that. The sheaf of wheat was next untied, and each taking a handful, held it over the flame till it was sufficiently scorched, and then rubbed out the grain between their hands, into the copper plate. The fire was then drawn off a second time, and the fish dug out, and, after rubbing off the sand, and taking out the bowels, they sat down to supper. And such, master, was the ordinary economy of the poorer tribes, that seemed drawn to the camp merely by curiosity. Some of the others brought fruit and vegetables to our market, and were much encouraged by our officers; but a set of greater rascals never breathed. At first, several of our men got flogged through them. They had a trick of raising a hideous outcry in the market place for every trifle—certain, d'ye see, of attracting the notice

of some of our officers, who were all sure to take part with them. The market, master, had to be encouraged, at all events; and it was some time ere the tricks of the rascals were understood in the proper quarter. But, to make short, Bill and I went out one morning to our walk. We had just heard—and heavy news it was to the whole regiment—that our colonel was despaired of, and had no chance of seeing out the day. Bill was in miserably low spirits. Captain Turpic had insulted him most grossly that morning. So long as the colonel had been expected to recover, he had shown him some degree of civility; but he now took every opportunity of picking a quarrel with him. There was no comparison in battle, master, between Bill and the captain; for the captain, I suspect, was little better than a coward; but, then, there was just as little on parade the other way; for Bill, you know, couldn't know a great deal, and the captain was a perfect martinet. He had called him vagrant and beggar, master, for omitting some little piece of duty; now, he couldn't help having been with *us*, you know; and, as for beggary, he had never begged in his life. Well, we had walked out towards the market, as I say.

'It's all nonsense, Jack,' says he, 'to be so dull on the matter; I'll e'en treat you to some fruit. I have a Sicilian dollar here. See that lazy fellow with the spade lying in front, and the burning mountain smoking behind him; we must see if he can't dig out for us a few *prans*' worth of dates.

Well, master, up he went to a tall, thin, rascally-looking Arab, with one eye, and bought as much fruit from him as might come to one-tenth of the dollar which he gave him, and then held out his hand for the change. But there was no change forthcoming. Bill wasn't a man to be done out of his cash in that silly way, and so he stormed at the rascal; but he, in turn, stormed as furiously, in his

own lingo, at him, till at last Bill's blood got up, and, seizing him by the breast, he twisted him over his knee, as one might a boy of ten years or so. The fellow raised a hideous outcry, as if Bill were robbing and murdering him. Two officers, who chanced to be in the market at the time, came running up at the noise; one of them was the scoundrel Turpic; and Bill was laid hold of, and sent off under guard to the camp. Poor fellow! he got scant justice there. Turpic had procured a man-of-war's man, who swore, as he well might, indeed, that Bill was the smuggler who had swamped the Kirkcudbright custom-house boat. There was another brought forward, who swore that both of us were gipsies, and told a blasted rigmarole story, without one word of truth in it, about the stealing of a silver spoon. The Arab had his story, too, in his own lingo; and they received every word of it; for my evidence went for nothing. I was of a race who never spoke the truth, they said—as if I weren't as good as a Mahommedan Arab. To crown all, in came Turpic's story, about what he called Bill's mutinous spirit in the action of the 21st. You may guess the rest, master. The poor fellow was broke that morning, and told that, were it not in consideration of his bravery, he would have got a flogging into the bargain.

I spent the evening of that day with Bill, outside the camp, and we ate the dates together, that in the morning had cost him so dear. The report had gone abroad—luckily a false one—that our colonel was dead; and that put an end to all hope, with the poor fellow, of having his case righted. We spoke together for, I am sure, two hours—spoke of Bill's early recollections, and of the hardship of his fate all along. And it was now worse with him, he said, than it had ever been before. He spoke of the strange, unaccountable hostility of Turpic; and I saw his brow grow dark, and the veins of his neck swell

almost to bursting. He trusted they might yet meet, he said, where there would be none to note who was the officer and who the private soldier. I did my best, master, to console the poor fellow, and we parted. The first thing I saw as I opened the tent door next morning, was Captain Turpic, brought into the camp by the soldier whose cousin Bill and I had assisted to bury. The captain was leaning on his shoulder, somewhat less than half alive, as it seemed, with four of his front teeth struck out, and a stream of blood all along his vest and small clothes. He had been met with by Bill, who had attacked him, he said, and, after breaking his sword, would have killed him, had not the soldier come up and interfered. But that, master, was the captain's story. The soldier told me, afterwards, that he saw the captain draw his sword ere Bill lifted hand at all; and that, when the poor fellow did strike, he gave him only one knock-down blow on the mouth, that laid him insensible at his feet; and that, when down, though he might have killed him twenty times over, he didn't so much as crook a finger on him. Nay, more; Bill offered to deliver himself up to the soldier, had not the latter assured him that he would to a certainty be shot, and advised him to make off. There was a party dispatched in quest of him, master, the moment Turpic had told his story; but he was lucky enough, poor fellow, to elude them; and they returned in the evening, just as they had gone out. And I saw no more of Bill in Egypt, master.

Never had troops less to do than we had, for the six months or so we afterwards remained in the country; and time hung wretchedly on the hands of some of us. Now that Bill was gone, I had no comrade with whom I cared to associate; and, as you may think, I often didn't know what to do with myself. After all our fears and regrets, master, our colonel recovered, and, one morning, about four months after the action, came ashore to see us. We

were sadly pestered with flies, master. I have seen, I am sure, a bushel of them on the top of our tent at once. They buzzed all night by millions round our noses, and many a plan did we think of to get rid of them; but, after destroying hosts on hosts they still seemed as thick as before. I had fallen on a new scheme this morning. I placed some sugar on a board, and surrounded it with gunpowder; and, when the flies had settled by thousands on the sugar, I fired the powder by means of a train, and the whole fell dead on the floor of the tent. I had just got a capital shot, when up came the colonel, and sat down beside me.

'I wish to know,' he said, 'all you can tell me about Bill Whyte; you were his chief friend and companion, I have heard, and are acquainted with his early history. Can you tell me ought of his parentage.

'Nothing of that, colonel,' I said; 'and yet I have known Bill almost ever since he knew himself.'

And so, master, I told him all that I knew; how Bill had been first taken to us by my mother; of the purse of gold she had brought with her, which had kept us all so merry; and of the noble spirit he had shown among us when he grew up. I told him, too, of some of Bill's early recollections; of the scarlet dress trimmed with silver, which had been brought to his mind by the sergeant's coat the first day he wore it; of the gentleman and lady, too, whom he remembered to have lived with; and of the supposed resemblance he had found between the former and the colonel. The colonel, as I went on, was strangely agitated, master. He held an open letter in his hand, and seemed, every now and then, to be comparing particulars; and, when I mentioned Bill's supposed recognition of him, he actually started from off his seat.

'Good Heavens!' he exclaimed, 'why was I not brought acquainted with this before!'

I explained the why, master, and told him all about Captain Turpic; and he left me with, you may be sure, no very favourable opinion of the captain. But I must now tell you, master, a part of my story which I had but from hearsay.

The colonel had been getting over the worse effects of his wound, when he received a letter from a friend in England, informing him that his brother-in-law, the father of Captain Turpic, had died suddenly, and that his sister, who, to all appearance was fast following, had been making strange discoveries regarding an only son of the colonel's, who was supposed to have been drowned about seventeen years before. The colonel had lost both his lady and child by a frightful accident. His estate lay near Olney, on the banks of the Ouse; and the lady, one day, during the absence of the colonel, who was in London, was taking an airing in the carriage with her son, a boy of three years or so, when the horses took fright, and, throwing the coachman, who was killed on the spot, rushed into the river. The Ouse is a deep, sluggish stream, dark and muddy in some of the more dangerous pools, and mantled over with weeds. It was into one of these the carriage was overturned; assistance came too late, and the unfortunate lady was brought out, a corpse; but the body of the child was nowhere to be found. It now came out, however, from the letter, that the child had been picked up, unhurt, by the colonel's brother-in-law, who, after concealing it for nearly a week, during the very frenzy of the colonel's distress, had then given it to a gipsy. The rascal's only motive—he was a lawyer, master—was that his own son, the captain, who was then a boy of twelve years or so, and not wholly ignorant of the circumstance, might succeed to the colonel's estate. The writer of the letter added that, on coming to the knowledge of the singular confession, he had made instant search after the gipsy to whom the child

had been given, and had been fortunate enough to find her, after tracing her over half the kingdom, in a cave, near Fortrose, in the north of Scotland. She had confessed all; stating, however, that the lad, who had borne among the tribe the name of Bill Whyte, and had turned out a fine fellow, had been outlawed, for some smuggling feat, about eighteen months before, and had enlisted, with a young man, her son, into a regiment bound for Egypt. You see, master, there couldn't be a shadow of doubt that my comrade, Bill Whyte, was just Henry Westhope, the colonel's son and heir. But the grand matter was where to find him. Search as we might, all search was in vain; we could trace him no further than outside the camp, to where he had met with Captain Turpie. I should tell you, by the way, that the captain was now sent to Coventry, by every one, and that not an officer in the regiment would return his salute.

Well, master, the months passed, and at length the French surrendered; and, having no more to do in Egypt, we all re-embarked, and sailed for England. The short peace had been ratified before our arrival; and I, who had become heartily tired of the life of a soldier, now that I had no one to associate with; was fortunate enough to obtain my discharge. The colonel retired from the service at the same time. He was as kind to me as if he had been my father, and offered to make me his forester, if I would but come and live beside him; but I was too fond of a wandering life for that. He was corresponding, he told me, with every British consul within fifteen hundred miles of the Nile; but he had heard nothing of Bill, master. Well, after seeing the colonel's estate, I parted from him, and came north, to find out my people, which I soon did; and, for a year or so, I lived with them just as I have been doing since. I was led, in the course of my wanderings, to Leith, and was standing, one morning, on the pier,

among a crowd of people, who had gathered round to see a fine vessel from the Levant, that was coming in at the time, when my eye caught among the sailors a man exceedingly like Bill. He was as tall, and even more robust, and he wrought with all Bill's activity; but, for some time, I could not catch a glimpse of his face. At length, however, he turned round, and there, sure enough, was Bill himself. I was afraid to hail him, master, not knowing who among the crowd might also know him, and know him also as a deserter or an outlaw; but you may be sure I wasn't long in leaping aboard and making up to him. And we were soon as happy, master, in one of the cellars of the Coal-hill, as we had been in all our lives before.

Bill told me his history since our parting. He had left the captain lying at his feet, and struck across the sand, in the direction of the Nile, one of the mouths of which he reached next day. He there found some Greek sailors, who were employed in watering; and, assisting them in their work, he was brought aboard their vessel, and engaged as a seaman by the master, who had lost some of his crew by the plague. As you may think, master, he soon became a prime sailor, and continued with the Greeks, trading among the islands of the Archipelago, for about eighteen months, when, growing tired of the service, and meeting with an English vessel, he had taken a passage home. I told him how much ado we had all had about him after he had left us, and how we were to call him Bill Whyte no longer. And so, in short, master, we set out together for Colonel Westhope's.

In our journey, we met with some of our people on a wild moor of Cumberland, and were invited to pass the night with them. They were of the Curlit family; but you will hardly know them as that. Two of them had been with us when Bill swamped the custom-house boat. They were fierce, desperate fellows, and not much to be

trusted by their friends even; and I was afraid that they might have somehow come to guess that Bill had brought some clinkers home with him. And so, master, I would fain have dissuaded him from making any stay with them in the night time; for I did not know, you see, in what case we might find our *weasands* in the morning; but Bill had no fears of any kind, and was, besides, desirous to spend one last night with the gipsies; and so he stayed. The party had taken up their quarters in a waste house on the moor, with no other human dwelling within four miles of it. There was a low, stunted wood on the one side, master, and a rough, sweeping stream on the other: the night, too, was wild and boisterous; and, what between suspicion and discomfort, I felt well nigh as drearily as I did when lying among the dead men in Egypt. We were nobly treated, however, and the whisky flowed like water, but we drank no more than was good for us. Indeed, Bill was never a great drinker; and I kept on my guard, and refused the liquor, on the plea of a bad head. I should have told you that there were but three of the Curlits—all of them raw-boned fellows, however, and all of them of such stamp that the three have since been hung. I saw they were sounding Bill; but he seemed aware of them.

'Ay, ay,' said he, 'I have made something by my voyaging, lads, though, mayhap, not a great deal. What think you of that there now, for instance?'—drawing, as he spoke, a silver-mounted pistol out of each pocket—'these are pretty pops, and as good as they are pretty; the worst of them sends a bullet through an inch board at twenty yards.'

'Are they loaded, Bill?' asked Tom Curlit.

'To be sure,' said Bill, returning them again, each to its own pouch. 'What is the use of an empty pistol?'

'Ah,' replied Tom, 'I smell a rat, Bill. You have given

over making war on the king's account, and have taken the road to make war on your own. Bold enough, to be sure.'

From the moment they saw the pistols, the brothers seemed to have changed their plan regarding us—for some plan I am certain they had. They would now fain have taken us into partnership with them; but their trade was a woundy bad one, master, with a world more of risk than profit.

'Why lads,' said Tom Curlit to Bill and me, 'hadn't you better stay with us altogether? The road won't do in these days at all. No, no, the law is a vast deal over strong for that; and you will be tucked up like dogs for your very first affair. But, if you stay with us, you will get on in a much quieter way on this wild moor here. Plenty of game, Bill; and, sometimes, when the nights are long, we contrive to take a purse with as little trouble as may be. We had an old pedlar, only three weeks ago, that brought us sixty good pounds.—By the way, brothers, we must throw a few more sods over him, for I nosed [illegible] this morning as I went by.—And, lads, we have something in hand just now that, with to be sure a little more risk, will pay better still. Two hundred yellow boys in hand, and five hundred more when our work is done. Better that, Bill, than standing to be shot at, for a shilling per day.'

'Two hundred in hand, and five hundred more when you have done your work!' exclaimed Bill. 'Why, that is sure enough princely pay, unless the work be very bad indeed. But, come, tell us what you propose. You can't expect us to make it a leap in the dark matter.'

'The work is certainly a little dangerous,' said Tom, 'and we of ourselves are rather few; but, if you both join with us, there would be a vast deal less of danger indeed. The matter is just this. A young fellow, like ourselves,

has a rich old uncle, who has made his will in his favour; but then he threatens to make another will that won't be so favourable to him by half; and you see the drawing across of a knife—so—would keep the first one in force. And that is all we have to do before pocketing the blunt. But, then, the old fellow is as brave as a lion; and there are two servants with him, worn-out soldiers like himself, that would, I am sure, be rough customers. With your help, however, we shall get on primely. The old boy's house stands much alone; and we shall be five to three.'

'Well, well,' said Bill, 'we shall give your proposal a night's thought, and tell you what we think of it in the morning. But, remember, no tricks, Tom! If we engage in the work, we must go share and share alike in the booty.'

'To be sure,' said Tom; and so the conversation closed.

About eight o'clock, or so, master, I stepped out to the door. The night was dark and boisterous as ever, and there had come on a heavy rain. But I could see that, dark and boisterous as it was, some one was approaching the house with a dark lanthern. I lost no time in telling the Curlits so.

'It must be the captain,' said they; 'though it seems strange that he should come here to-night. You must away, Jack and Bill, to the loft, for it mayn't do for the captain to find you here; but you can lend us a hand afterwards, should need require it.'

There was no time for asking explanations, master; and so up we climbed to the loft, and had got snugly concealed among some old hay, when in came the captain. But what captain, think you? Why, just our old acquaintance, Captain Turpie!

'Lads,' he said to the Curlits, 'make yourselves ready; get your pistols. Our old scheme is blown; for the colonel has left his house at Olney, on a journey to Scotland; but

he passes here to-night, and you must find means to stop him—now or never!'

'What force and what arms has he with him, captain?' asked Tom.

'The coachman, his body servant, and himself,' said the captain; 'but only the servant and himself are armed. The stream outside is high to-night; you must take them just as they are crossing it, and thinking of only the water; and, whatever else you may mind, make sure of the colonel.'

'Sure as I live,' said Bill to me, in a low whisper, ''tis a plan to murder Colonel Westhope! And, good Heavens!' he continued, pointing through an opening in the gable, 'yonder is his carriage, not a mile away. You may see the lantherns, like two fiery eyes, coming sweeping along the moor. We have no time to lose; let us slide down through the opening, and meet with it.'

As soon done as said, master; we slid down along the turf gable, crossed the stream, which had risen high on its banks, by a plank bridge for foot passengers, and then dashed along the broken road in the direction of the carriage. We came up to it, as it was slowly crossing an open drain.

'Colonel Westhope!' I cried, 'Colonel Westhope!—stop! stop!—turn back! You are waylaid by a party of ruffians, who will murder you if you go on.'

The door opened and the colonel stepped out, with his sword under his left arm, and a cocked pistol in his hand.

'Is not that Jack Whyte?' he asked.

'The same, noble colonel,' I said; 'and here is Henry, your son.'

It was no place or time, master, for long explanations; there was one hearty congratulation, and one hurried embrace; and the colonel, after learning from Bill the number of the assailants, and the plan of the attack, ordered

the carriage to drive on slowly before, and followed, with us and his servant, on foot, behind.

'The rascals,' he said, 'will be so dazzled with the flare of the lantherns in front, that we will escape notice till they have fired, and then we shall have them for the picking down.'

And so it was, master. Just as the carriage was entering the stream, the coachman was pulled down by Tom Curlit; at the same instant, three bullets went whizzing through the glasses, and two fellows came leaping out from behind some furze to the carriage door. A third, whom I knew to be the captain, lagged behind. I marked him, however; and when the colonel and Bill were disposing of the other two—and they took them so sadly by surprise, master, that they had but little difficulty in throwing them down, and binding them—I was lucky enough to send a piece of lead through the captain. He ran about twenty yards, and then dropped down, stone dead. Tom escaped us; but he cut a throat some months after, and suffered for it at Carlisle. And his two brothers, after making a clean breast, and confessing all, were transported for life. But they found means to return in a few years after, and were both hung on the gallows on which Tom had suffered before them.

I have not a great deal more to tell you, master. The colonel has been dead for the last twelve years, and his son has succeeded him in his estate. There is not a completer gentleman in England than Henry Westhope, master, nor a finer fellow. I call on him every time I go round, and never miss a hearty welcome; though, by the by, I am quite as sure of a hearty scold. He still keeps a snug little house empty for me, and offers to settle on me fifty pounds a-year, whenever I choose to give up my wandering life, and go and live with him. But what's bred in the bone won't come out of the flesh, master, and I have

not yet closed with his offer. And, really, to tell you my mind, I don't think it quite respectable. Here I am, at present, a free, independent tinker—no man more respectable than a tinker, master—all allow that; whereas, if I go and live with Bill, on an unwrought-for fifty pounds a-year, I will be hardly better than a mere master tailor or shoemaker. No, no, that would never do! Nothing like respectability, master, let a man fare as hard as he may."

I thanked the gipsy for his story, and told him I thought it almost worth while putting it in print. He thanked me, in turn, for liking it so well, and assured me I was quite at liberty to put it in print as soon as I choose. And so I took him at his word.

"But yonder," said he, "is the moon rising, red and huge over the three tops of Belrinnes, and throwing, as it brightens, its long strip of fire across the Frith. Take care of your footing, just as you reach the top of the crag; there is an awkward gap there on the rock edge that reminds me of an Indian trap; but, as for the rest of the path, you will find it quite as safe as by day. Good-by!"

I left him, and made the best of my way home; where, while the facts were fresh in my mind, I committed to paper (for the express purpose of having it inserted among the Border Tales) the gipsy's story.

THE PROFESSOR'S TALES.

THE LAST OF THE PEDLARS.

"Atlas was so exceeding strong,
He bore the skies upon his back,
Just as a pedlar does his pack."—SWIFT.

THE whole framework of society has been so much altered within these last sixty years, that a person who has been born within that period, unless from tradition, must remain entirely ignorant of the manners and habits of his immediate predecessors. *Now*, highroads, carriages by land and water, with all manner of facilities of intercourse, have brought every part of the country, even the most remote corners, into contact, as it were, with every other part. Any great or engrossing fact or feeling flies immediately, on wings of paper, and in characters of ink, from land's-end to land's-end. But, formerly, this was very far from being the case. The press, as a vehicle of public news, was altogether in its infancy. Roads *were* not, or they were all *but* impassable; and the one end of the island might be sunk into the sea, without the other extremity having any immediate perception of the loss. But we must not conclude, on this account, that our forefathers were without curiosity, or without the means of gratifying that passion for news which is deeply seated in our nature. Not at all; the very inconveniences of their position produced, in a great measure, the means of reciprocal intelligence.

There were the tailor and the trogger, but, above and beyond all, the pedlar, the most respected and interesting of all walking and migrating gazettes, who, in the non-

existence of woollen-drapers and haberdashers, nailed, like bad silver, to a locality, wandered from Dan to Beersheba —in other words, from Glasgow to Manchester, and *vice versa*—carrying all manner of fashionable clothing on their backs, and a vast assortment of fore-night gabble in their heads. As these itinerant merchants behoved to be young and strong, so they were generally unmarried, and kept up a kind of running fire with the lasses. Their opportunities of observing the characteristics of the farmer's fireside were unbounded, as they not unfrequently remained stationary for two or three days in one place. After several years of laborious travel, and enormous profits, at little or no expense in point of diet, such individuals generally purchased a stout horse, to carry the increased load of goods. The horse, again, was ultimately attached to a waggon, and the waggon, at last, stuck in the midst of some flourishing village or town, and became a regular haberdashery shop. Thus, through industry, all but dishonest parsimony, prudence, and perseverance, a comfortable independence often crowned the old age of the packman; and he was not unfrequently found with a fishing-rod by the mountain-stream, or with a book in the corner of his snug little garden, towards the close of his varied and eventful history. It was but the other day that we attended the sale of an old bachelor of this description—the last, we believe, of the race—and that, amidst a parcel of old books and papers, which we purchased *en masse*, we discovered a well written and somewhat extended manuscript, from which we intend to cull a few chapters for the amusement of our readers.

CHAPTER I.

It is now upwards of sixty years (says the packman) since I first took yard-wand in hand, and pack on back, ad-

dicting myself to much pedestrian travel, with the view of supplying dames with needles and shears, maidens with shawls and Bibles, and servant lads with watch-chains and waistcoat pieces. Having, at last, and after many wanderings and much converse with men, women, and children —not to mention dogs, which, in the hill-country, are numerous and noisy—having, I say, at last reached, as it were, a port or haven of rest, I sit here in my arm chair, with old Ponto on one side, and my not less faithful friend, the schoolmaster, on the other, keeping a calm look out over the ocean upon which I have been tossed, and recalling, as well as endeavouring in the best way I can to narrate, the somewhat varied incidents of my past life.

It is quite true that I was never properly bred for any profession, but was simply educated in the reading of English, and in the keeping of accounts, and may, therefore, be supposed to be very unfit for anything like grand composition, or style of language; but in case this narrative should, by any accident, as they say, *see the light*, I must premise that I am possessed of advantages of which the reader, till I inform him, cannot possibly be apprised. I have the benefit of my friend the schoolmaster's strictures; of which, however, I shall only avail myself, in regard to the language, and that merely when I am fairly convinced that he is right and that I am wrong. With the wording of this very last sentence, Dominie Tawse finds fault, and insists upon it, that there is, I think he calls it, a "pleonasm" in it; but of this he has failed to convince me, and I therefore suffer the sentence to stand as it was originally written. In fact, I have a great respect for my good friend, the Dominie's opinions, in most occasions, but really, in regard to composition, his taste has been perverted by certain rules and regulations, to which he gives very hard names, and to which, in my opinion, he sacrifices both ease and sense.

I pass over the history of my early days. Were I to enter upon them, I should write a volume, and still have volumes to write; for I was born in a mountain glen, beside a mountain stream—my father being a shepherd—and where I grew insensibly into an affectionate friendship for everything around me; for my dear and indulgent mother; for my douce and sagacious father; for our two dogs, Help and Watch; for the old grey cat; for all manner of wooden trenchers, spoons, and ladles; for the stream that winded past the byre-end; for every fin that shoot across the pool; for the sheep bleating upon the brae and glen; for the glen and brae themselves; for the mist, the clouds, the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars—which all seemed made for and subservient to us, and us alone. I pass over the killing of my first trout, with a crooked pin, my noviciate in fishing, and my amazing progress and success in after years; but I cannot pass over a song, which, in these my days of youthful glee, I laboured into something like the tune, I think, of "Blue Bonnets over the Border:"—

"Oh, would you wish to gang to the fishing, lad—
Ye maun get up in the morning sae early,
Wi' step like the roe-deer, and blythe heart and glad,
And tackle in order, to start to it fairly.
Away! while the sleepers around you are dreaming,
Away! while the grey eye of morning is beaming,
Ere the mist leaves the mountain,
The wild duck the fountain,
Or the pure light of day o'er the world is streaming.

"Gang down by the glen where the burnie rows gently,
When the light western breeze the stream ripples over;
By the deep eddied pools, where, silent and tently,
The trout keep his watch, 'neath the willowed bank's cover.
And there, with the fly, where the water winds slowly,
Neatly and clean throw it out just below you;
Watch for him steadily,
Strike at him readily.
And run him till, faint, on the sward he lies lowly.

"With the well-seasoned bait in the streams that are fleetest,
Fish the large yellow fellows, two pounders or more;
You are sure of a tune to the fisher's ear sweetest,
For the sound of the pirn is all music before.
He comes with a boil, like a deep caldron gasping,
So sudden and keenly the tempting bait grasping—
Hark to him dashing!
See to him splashing!
Now he pants on the green, and your hand cannot clasp him."

I pass over, likewise, the mournful recollection of my worthy father's death. He was swept away in an avalanche, which, on the melting of the snow, detached itself from the mountain's brow. He and Help perished together. Oh, I remember, as it were but yesterday, Watch's look when he entered the house, and all but told us in words what had happened. But what avail such recollections? My father was dead, and, in a few hours, my mother followed him; she was seized prematurely with her pains, and, ere assistance could be procured, there was a dead mother and a still-born child. I wonder yet that I kept my senses; but I was stupified. My uncle, a gruff and worldly-minded, but shrewd carle, arranged and managed everything, and took me home with him, the day after the double funeral.

My mother's brother—with whom I now lived, and by whom I was educated, in the town of Moffat, Dumfriesshire—had made a respectable independence as a packman; and having only one son, and being a widower, he found no great inconvenience in accommodating me. His son was grown up; and, having a natural taste for a seafaring life, he was, soon after my arrival, placed as middy on board of an East Indiaman; so my uncle and I had the whole house to ourselves. But my uncle's temper was bad; and there was that in his manner to me, which seemed ever and anon to say—You are devilishly in my road, I wish I were quit of you. Accordingly, being now

a pretty well-educated lad of seventeen, I cast about in my own mind for a profession, or some way or other of supporting myself, independent of my snarling relative. Jamaica, I remember, was thought of, and I even had some pairs of shoes made for the voyage; but the person died on whose patronage my uncle relied, and the scheme luckily blew up. I wrote a good hand, and was quite master of book-keeping, both by single and double entry; so I was put to a writer's desk in Dumfries, with many admonitions, and much wise instruction. But I had been accustomed to the hills and streams, and fishing, and all the varieties of an active life; and so, one fine evening, I went out to walk on the banks of the Nith, but forgot to return to my desk next morning. In fact, I had returned to Moffat, telling my uncle that I was tired of sitting, and would rather, like himself, carry a pack. At this he seemed at first somewhat startled; but, finding me resolute, he at last consented, and agreed to furnish me with credit to the amount of £20 sterling. A suitable box was accordingly purchased, and a somewhat limited assortment of penknives, watch-seals, scissors, thimbles, needles, pins, brooches, Bibles, and Psalm-books, with a small assortment of shawls, waistcoat pieces, and Kilmarnock night-caps, &c., were selected and packed up; and the following morning was fixed upon for my departure, when my uncle requested my company for a little in his own small sitting room, off the kitchen.

"You are about," said my uncle, "to enter upon a profession, the profits of which, if rated according to shop regulations, would be altogether inadequate to the recompense of your risk and trouble; you must, therefore, effect an 'assurance,' as it were, by disposing of every article at the highest price you can possibly obtain. Ask, if you mean to secure a reasonable and a remunerating profit, at least double the prime or original cost; and thus you

can afford to be prigged, or beat down from penny to penny, till you all but swear that the purchaser has the article below prime cost. In all your travels, never lodge at an inn or public house. One single instance of this, well authenticated, would ruin your trade for ever; for every lad and lass, every guidman and guidwife, would infallibly conclude, that, if you could afford such expensive accommodation, it must undoubtedly be at their cost—it must be exacted from the ribbons, shawls, gown and waistcoat pieces, with which you supply them. You must, therefore, fix, as soon as may be, upon your points or stations of regulated half-yearly or yearly calls; and this is undoubtedly one of the nicest and most delicate points of your profession, and must be managed, not so much on any general principle, as by a reference to character and circumstance. There are, undoubtedly, many farm-houses, from which the sooner that you depart, and relieve the dogs of their clamour, the better. But this is not their universal or even general character. Whenever you find the guidwife couthy and heartsome, the guidman gruff, and frank, and honest, and the daughters young and buxom, there deposit your pack on Saturday night, and if greatly pressed, do not lift it again till Tuesday or Wednesday morning. Monday or Tuesday, if you are up to your trade, can be advantageously employed in exhibiting, bit by bit, and at intervals, the wonders of the pack; in retailing, with a corresponding parsimony, your country and city news; and in disposing of as many articles on trust (for you must never deal for ready money only), as may entitle you to announce your return with new patterns and fashions that day six or twelve months. To the sheep or stock-farmer in particular, your periodical visits will be the welcomest: for, as he lies at a distance from shops or cities, his wants will be numerous, and his knowledge of the market price imperfect in proportion. To him, too,

you can render yourself useful on various occasions. At speaning and smearing time, in particular, you can lend him a lift; for you must never grudge a little labour of this sort, to secure you a good market, and a welcome back again. There is a way, too, of gratifying your customers, and of benefiting at the same time yourself, which you would do well to observe: Whenever occasion may offer, your maxim is to please them on the spot, and without delay; for delays in purchasers, like those in other matters, are dangerous. Your pack is exposed, and every eye is turned intently upon its many attractions. The farmer's daughter is mightily pleased with a particular pattern, but wishes it more of a superior quality. The only test, however, which your inexperienced customer has of quality, is *price*. You have asked, I shall suppose, five shillings, which may be about double its value, for this pattern; but it will not do—a finer article is wanted. You immediately recollect that you actually have such an article somewhere else, and bustle over you goods in great seeming confusion. At last, up the pattern turns; but the price is high—in fact, you did not mean to part with it, as it was in a manner bespoke by an old customer. Thus, the *very identical* shawl is disposed of at double the price, and your customer is obliged at the same time. The neat performance of this allowable imposition, requires, however, some previous practice, so that no suspicion may, in any case, attach to you.

"Never," continued my uncle, after inhaling his usual large allowance of snuff—"never neglect golden opportunities, or favourable occasions. A death is one of those most propitious occurrences; and, if it take place suddenly, and in one of your 'starting families,' so much the better. Hasten forward, or backward, (as may suit your purpose, on such occasions), with all possible dispatch.

Night and day you must continue your travel towards the house of mourning, and, after suitable inquiries and condolences, which must never be overtasked, you may, as it were incidentally, mention that, by the most strange coincidence, your present stock of mourning articles is full and good. A whole black suit for the guidman, or a gown, at least, and ribbons for the mistress, will yield a profit more than equal to console your grief, and reconcile you to the behests of Providence.

"The lassie, again, who is thinking of marriage, will easily be recognised by her bashful look and embarrassed manner. You will soon learn to observe the great approaching event, in a laughing eye and an excited demeanour—

"Coming events cast their shadows before;"

and, under the advanced shadow of this coming event, you will be able to spread out your pack to some purpose. Whatever of head-gear, ribbon, or lace, flutters in the wind, adorns the countenance, or borders a dress gown, you will be ready to afford, at prices greatly reduced since last season. Bridegrooms, too, make presents; and for this purpose you must have neat-bound Bibles, gilt Psalm-books, and Boston's "Fourfold State." Marriages have a natural tendency towards, and connexion with christenings; and you will be a lame calculator if you cannot make it your business to be present on these occasions, with such dresses as infancy, thus circumstanced, is known to require.

"Fairs, too, and markets, are never beneath your notice: not that I would advise you to attend indiscriminately such public resorts. There is danger in this; for if, whilst selling, as you would be compelled to do, your goods at a fair market price, some of your muirland customers should observe it, your private and more lucrative trade would be endangered; but, in markets sufficiently remote from your ordinary route, no such consequences are to be appre-

hended, and there you may occasionlly get rid of some old and rather unsaleable stock.

"One of the most important secrets of the trade is, the recovery of bad debts; for, however delighted your customers may be with their fine new fashionable articles when they are purchased, the day of payment is always an unwelcome day.

> "So comes the reckoning, when the banquet's o'er,
> The awful reckoning, and men smile no more."

"Servants, too, frequently change their service, and you will often have great difficulty in tracing them out. In every instance, almost, some particular procedure must be resorted to. In one case, you may succeed by threats, and by pretending to read a warrant of apprehension; in another, a little flattery may not be amiss, particularly with the fair sex. 'It is, indeed, a pity that the price is not forthcoming: for you never saw *her* look so handsome as she did in the still unpaid article. Could she only manage the one-half now, you would take her acknowledgment for the other half, next time you came about,' &c. &c. In desperate cases, desperate measures must be resorted to. For example," continued my knowing instructor, "I'll tell you how I once recovered thirty shillings, which I had fully given up as lost.

"There was a servant lass, in the parish of Penpont, who had the hardihood not only to refuse me payment, but actually to aver that she owed me not a farthing, that she had already paid me, and would not pay me twice over. True, she had no receipt for the money; but then I was in the habit of receiving money without giving or being asked for any receipt whatever. What was to be done? There had been no witnesses of the transaction. Was I to sit quietly down, not only under the loss, but under the suspicion that I was capable of charging twice

for the same purchase? I, at last, after much meditation, devised and carried into effect the following method of recovery. I shut myself up in a room, in the village of Penpont, for a day or two, and took care to have it noised abroad, by means of a boy whom I had bribed into the secret, first, that I had been taken suddenly and extremely ill, and lastly, that I had died. This report I took particular care to have conveyed to the ears of my fair debtor. She resided about two miles from the village. In a day or two, my messenger repaired to the lady, averring that I had left him, being a near relative, my heir, and that he had found a debt due by her in my books, which debt he requested her to liquidate incontinent. To this proposal Tibby opposed words and actions of the most disdainful and reproachful character, calling my agent many bad names, and at last setting him to the door by actual violence. In the meantime, knowing what was likely to occur, I hove in sight, at the further extremity of a grass field, in full uniform, with my well-known pack on my back, and my yard-wand in my hand.

"'Aweel,' says Sandy, "'if ye winna pay, I canna help it; but there *he's* coming to speak to you *himsel.* So ye can e'en settle the business atwixt ye.'

"'The Lord forbid!' exclaimed Tibby, looking towards my approach, with staring eyes, and limbs trembling like an aspen leaf—'The Lord Almighty forbid, Sandy! Come here! come here! Wait a moment till I get the key of my trunk! Here, here! there's the money, every shilling, and see ye letna the awfu' dead creature come ony nearer us.'

"And thus I recovered my just debt, and afforded a source of much good-humoured merriment to the neighbourhood for many days afterwards."

CHAPTER II.

It was on a fine morning in the latter end of the month of October, that I took yard-wand in hand, and pack on back for the first time. The sun shone slanting and sweetly over wood, and vale, and hill-side; and the light and airy gossamer (at this season *only* visible) lay in gleaming and floating lines, over grass fields and ploughed lands. I bent my way to the mountains, well knowing that there, at a distance from shop or market, I should most likely meet with a sale for my goods, and should, at the same time, fix the prices, without fear of check or detection. By the time that I had reached Locherben, the sun had set, and the twilight was still lingering on the tops of the twin Queensberries. The herds were coming in from the hills; the guidman was steeking some yetts in the inclosure of the in-fields; and the guidwife, with some half-a-dozen servant lasses, were busily employed in domestic arrangements. Dogs were everywhere to be seen, meeting in unity, or snarling defiance over some contested pot from which they were extracting a rather scanty meal. I leaned my pack on a fail or turf dike, which enclosed a few ill-thriven cabbages, and waited patiently an invitation from some chance inmate to enter. At last, a canny lass came out, with a tub full of sheeps entrails, which she proceeded to cleanse and scour in the passing stream. She took up her station near to where I leaned, and, blithely singing the while, proceeded, with kilted coats, and sleeves tucked up to the shoulders, to perform her work. Having cast a random glance around her, she immediately perceived that she was not alone—and, without any feeling or appearance of embarrassment, immediately proceeded to address me—

"And what are *you*, sitting there, like a craw in the

mist? and what's that lying behint you, man?—Losh preserve us! hae ye gotten a coffin on yer back, or are ye just a kintra lad, gain hame wi' yer sister's kist on yer shoulders?—Speak, body, speak this minute, or I'll come alang yer chafts wi' a nievefu o' thairms!"—Thus saying, she actually left the pure water which she was so busy defiling, and, brandishing some score of yards of the tripe in her right hand, was in the act of accomplishing her threat, when I suddenly disengaged myself from the arm-strings of my pack, and, parrying the blow which was aimed at me, I closed at once with my fair adversary, and, ere she could raise a scream, sufficient to alarm the whole town land, I had taken as many favours from her as ever Apollo did from Daphne. To scream so loud and shrill as to bring down upon us half-a-dozen dogs, and nearly as many herds, was the work of an instant; but of an instant during which she was made distinctly to perceive that I was no lassie, but a young fellow of some spunk and mettle.

"What's the matter wi' Jenny?" said a stout figure, snugly wrapped up in the shepherd's toga.

"Matter!" replied Jenny—"matter!"—adjusting her dress, and now red from ear to ear—"why, I believe, after a', there is nae great matter—but that body frightened me sae with his kists and his coffins. I was amaist out o' my wits."

"Kists and coffins, ye gomeril woman!—why, that's a packman; and I'll warrant he has as mony shawls, and gown-pieces, and ribbons, and as muckle braw Brussels lace in his box, as wad set ye fleeing to kirk on Sabbath, like an Indian queen. Come in, lad—come ben—its getting dark, and ye're far here frae ony neighbour town—come away, and ye shall hae yer supper in the spense, and yer bed in the cha'mer—and Jenny there into the bargain, if ye will only promise to mak us rid o' her for guid and a'."

"Jenny!—hegh! that's ane indeed!" responded the fair

tripe-scourer.—"I'se warrant, guidman, ye wad soon be sending a' owre the country, and sticking up bits o' paper on the kirk doors, war I only four-and-twenty hours amissing; and, as for Wee Watty there—if there be a bauk low enough to hang him, ye wad be sure to find him, ere the first twal hours were owre, dangling frae't, like a periwinkie candle hanging to a spit."

Upon this sally of Nanny's wit, all things were put to rights, and the packman was snugly lodged *versus* the guidman, the guidwife, and God only knows how many persons, in the spence, or small apartment adjoining to and looking in upon the kitchen. The chapman's drouth is proverbial—and, to assuage it, I was immediately supplied with a cog o' crap-whey, bannocks, and a ram-horn spoon, just to put aff the time till supper was ready! In the meanwhile, the inmates of the farmer's kitchen began and continued to congregate. Some half-score of acres of inland croft had just been reaped, and there had been the promise of a hett supper and a dance, to conclude the comparatively insignificant grain harvest. James Hogg, then a youth of twenty-four, acted as chief musician, and contrived to extract from the thairms of an old time-worn fiddle, some sounds, which, when assisted by a lively imagination and high animal spirits, passed for music. And the guidman led off the dance wi' the guidwife—snapping his fingers, and springing three or four times over the kitchen fire. The guidwife enjoyed the fun exceedingly; and, though encumbered in more ways than one, spread her napkin over her breast—adjusted her pockets and nether garments, and presented herself every now and then to the guidman, with a sly look and a sidelong bob. I was lucky enough to get hold of Nanny, whom, in spite of Wee Watty, as he was termed, I drew at once into the centre of the whirlpool, and there we went, hand in hand, round and round, with the velocity of planets whose orbits

are limited—Wee Watty, for the time, having supplied himself with Nell Morrison, a tall, prepossessing wench, who seemed to rejoice in vexing my partner, Nanny, who was manifestly Wee Watty's favourite. Shepherds—as Wilson would say, shepherdesses—sported around, like giants dancing to Polyphemus; and boys, girls, and dogs caught the infection—screaming, barking, singing, leaping, and reeling, as God gave them instinct. Hogg seemed amazingly delighted, and, ever and anon, removed his hand from the strings of the fiddle, to flourish it aloft in the air, and then come down flap upon some sonsy cummer's neck, as she demanded "Dainty Davie," "Jenny Nettles," or "The Highlandman kissed his Mother"—the triad which composed our fiddler's whole stock of tunes!

At last, supper came, in the shape of boiled bloody puddings, haggis, king's-hood, and a long *et cetera* of inferior occupants of the interior of a sheep-skin. There was, besides, a sprinkling of whisky, administered in its natural purity, and, after a song or two from Nanny, and Hogg, who gave "Donald Macdonald" in his own style, sleep began to intimate his claims, and we all stepped off our several ways to bed.

I could easily perceive, as I imagined—for there is a masonry in all manner of love concerns—that I had made a favourable impression upon Nanny, and that she would have no great objection to spend an hour or two in my company when all the other inmates, and, amongst them, Watty Telfer, had gone to rest. I had learned all this by certain signs, and winks, and nods, and squeezes, which are Hebrew to all but the parties concerned; and I took my way across the closs to the cha'mer, under a firm conviction that I should meet Nanny behind the great peat stack whenever the last dog had ceased to bark. Accordingly, I was early at the place of rendezvous, and waited,

with some impatience, the approach of my fair visitant. The night was dark and somewhat misty, and I could not distinctly see to any distance. At last, a figure began to move in the distance, closely wrapped up in a Scottish plaid, from foot to head, and stretching forward its head as if in the act of listening. "Is that you, Nanny?" was whispered, and responded to by a silent nod of assent; and, ere I could make any farther observation, Nanny was close by my side. To my surprise, however, she refused to permit me to unveil her face, and spoke so low that I was difficulted in getting at the import of her words.

"Is Watty Telfer to bed?" said I.

"Yes—oh yes," was the response; "and you and I will play him a trick, if you will only assist me."

I promised immediately to be art and part—for I liked fun and frolic dearly, and I thought Watty was the only obstacle to my suit with fair Nanny.

"Watty sleeps by himsel in the stable aboon the naigs; and, if you will go up the ladder, which I will show you, you will find his clothes lying upon an old chair just at the ladder-head. Now, just slip quietly one of your best waistcoat-pieces into his pocket, and we will swear, tomorrow morning, that Watty entered the auld cha'mer, when you were asleep, and stole the piece. I will be answerable to you for the money."

The scheme pleased me exceedingly; so I ascended the ladder and deposited the goods as directed. But, when I turned about again to descend, I found the ladder, as well as my directress, absent without leave. What was to be done? I could not descend without risk to my neck from the stable loft; and yet I was afraid that, if Watty should awake, he would take me for a thief, and, perhaps, tumble me headlong from the dangerous position which I occupied. In feeling, therefore, about me, to ascertain if

there was no other method of escape, I was immediately seized by the neck, and grasped so closely that I had almost been choked ere I could ejaculate—"Help! murder!" &c. Not a word was said in reply; but I felt cords passing around my body in various directions, and myself tied down, like Gulliver, flat on the boards and beams beneath me. I expostulated—threatened—coaxed my tormentors—for I felt there were two—but all to no purpose. My destiny was fixed, and there I lay supine, whilst my mischievous jailors manifestly slept, and even snored aloud. At last, worn out with watching and vexation, I fell soundly asleep; and, when I awoke, it was broad daylight. I found my limbs unloosed, my tormentors gone, and the ladder by which I had ascended restored.

Next day, I learned that, instead of playing a trick upon any one, I had myself been imposed upon, to the immense amusement of Nanny and the whole household. It was not Nanny, but wee Watty Telfer, with whom I had conversed by the peat stack. It was *he*, set on by James Hogg, who had got me up the ladder, and then, entering himself by another passage, had assisted a fellow-servant in binding me, and in ultimately releasing me from limbo. Well, what, good reader, did I do on this occasion? Did I immediately take things in great dudgeon, and depart with my pack in great wrath? No such thing. I had listened to my uncle to little purpose had this been the result. On the contrary, I immediately displayed my tempting articles before the young couple, Watty and Nanny, who were actually bride and bridegroom, and sold to the whole family, the young folks included, not less than upwards of ten pounds of goods; not one farthing of which would I have pocketed had I been the fool to resent my somewhat disagreeable usage. Ever after this adventure, I was a welcome visitant at Locherben; and Nanny Telfer who is now the mistress of a large family, and has

servants of her own, patronises me to a very considerable extent. Wee Watty has become staid and industrious, and rents a sheep-farm from the Duke of Buccleuch, on which he seems to thrive amazingly. Indeed, all the duke's tenantry are in a very thriving condition; for this simple reason—that they are not rack-rented.

CHAPTER III.

It was about dusk when I was caught in a mist on the borders of Scotland. I had made my way from Manchester, by Kendal and Penrith, and was on a long stretch across the bleak muirs which separate England from Scotland, as you advance towards the village of Castletown on the Liddle. Not being familiar with the footpath which I was tracing, I fairly lost my way, and had some severe pulls, through mosses and ravines of no ordinary depth and extent. Still, I was young and strong, and not subject to superstitious fears. At last, however, I was enveloped in close and almost palpable darkness, or rather whiteness—for the ground-mist rose, and crawled, and trailed, white, and damp, and still, all around me. I even felt as if it entered my very nostrils, and made a portion of myself. I could scarcely see the two ends of my pack, as they peeped over my shoulders. My faithful dog Neptune, of the Newfoundland breed, went on, however, gaily and caressingly before me; and seemed to say, at every return, "Another effort, master—one pull more—and we shall be alongside of the flesh-pots of Mr. Elliot, laird of Whithaugh." All at once, I came to the brow of a precipice, from which my faithful monitor warned me to retreat; and while in the act of so doing, I thought I heard human voices in the linn beneath. Neptune, too, gave loud note of the dis-

covery; and in an instant was engaged in mortal warfare with a bull-dog of great power and fierceness. Whilst I was endeavouring, with my yard-wand, to separate the combatants, a stout, tall, and somewhat ungainly figure came, with a long horsewhip, to my assistance. The combatants, seeing how matters stood, were content to adopt the growling, instead of the tearing system; and separated, as if by mutual agreement, that matters should not long remain as they were. However, a leash of strong cord, with a neck-band, made fast Neptune's opponent, and rendered it safe for Neptune and me to accept of the stranger's invitation to join their camp.

The camp was, indeed, of a novel and somewhat strange description. Over a brawling current, which, as I was told, at this point separated England from Scotland, there were extended from rock to rock, poles and branches of dwarf-elder and saughs, which were growing, or rather decaying, on each side of the glen or linn. These branches and poles were again traversed by cords, which kept them in close order and regular position. Over all, were laid turf, and spret, and bog-hay, which formed a kind of isthmus betwixt the two kingdoms. When you stood in the middle of this erection, you were neither in England nor in Scotland, but *medio tutissimus;* and, should the civil power show its miscreant front on the one side, you could immediately retreat to the other, and *vice versa* with regard to that of England. The gipsies were the famous Yetholm band, and had hived here for some time past, disposing during the day-time, of their pots, pans, ram-horn spoons, and other kitchen conveniencies; and spending the night under shelter of their tents, located, or rather suspended, as above-mentioned, in riot, uproar, revelment, and debauchery. There were about an equal number of men and women, but no children—these being left at Yetholm, where they remained stationary during the winter months.

Their king or leader was at this time Cuthbert, or Cubby Elliot, who boasted of his long descent and connection with the laird of Whithaugh, on the skirts of whose property he was now encamped. The use which Cubby made of his relationship with Whithaugh, was to amerce him in a fat wedder every time he came round, together with a gallon of whisky, in consideration for which voluntary donation he protected his hen-roost and barn-yard from all manner of gipsy depredation. This was sheep-night, as it was called—the evening, namely, on which the Whithaugh wedder was to be discussed, and the whisky was to be drunk; and the whole company was in the middle of the wassail, when I stumbled upon their retreat.

Being not unknown to Cuthbert, whom I had even met at Whithaugh's fireside, I ran no risk either of insult or violence; but, on the contrary, was hailed with an uproarious welcome, which made the grey gled quit the cliff above. The small cask containing the laird's *due*, as they called it (mountain dew was then a term unknown), lay in the midst of the encampment, alongside of a blazing heap of brushwood, which seemed, ever and anon, to threaten with conflagration the whole erection; and the sheep, roasted, or rather broiled, in its own skin, betwixt two forked poles, was subjected every now and then to an incision from the large whangers or knives, which, like Hudibras' sword, "served more purposes than one." The mist sat close above; the flames roared in unison with the torrent beneath; the barrel gave out its glutting contents in horns and cups; the bare poles of the sheep began to appear in the shape of ribs; the song, the jest, the jeer, the howl, the tumble, the almost quarrel, were all in their height, when I thought I heard a distant but terrific sound. With difficulty I procured a temporary suspension of noise. It was manifestly distant thunder. No matter—on went the carousal. A young man who had lately joined the gang, made a

conspicuous figure; he was evidently over head, ears, and shoulders, in love with Ellen Elliot, the king's fair and buxom daughter. The fellow was such a one as I have never seen before nor since. He had the eye of a hawk or eagle; a nose corresponding; high cheek-bones; fair or yellowish hair, forking out like lightning in every direction; a red beard, fully a month old; and the limbs, and nerves, and muscles of a giant. He twisted a horse-shoe in two behind his back; held out a musket by the extremity of the muzzle, his arm at full stretch; and lifted up Ellen Elliot, tossing her up in the air, and catching her again, like a tennis ball. His name I have since learned, though I am not at liberty to divulge it, as he now occupies a chair in one of our most celebrated universities, which he adorns with as much vigour and originality as he did that night the tinkler's gathering. It is thus that men of genius study human nature to advantage, and not in the turning over of quarto volumes from one year's end to the other; and it was thus that the great and celebrated Christ—— N—— acquired that richness of illustration and vigour of conception which have raised him, in this respect, above every living name. Long may he live!—and often may the fresh and vigorous effusions of his pen recall to my recollection the astonishing gambols and revelment of this evening! At last, however, the cask gave out its last benediction—the utmost effort of man or woman could not extract a drop more; limbs became supple, and eyes misty, muddy, heavy, and shut. Men slid down in their garments, and snored aloud; women disappeared into the now closing obscurity, and huddled together under eaves and covering; the embers emitted, or were about to emit, their last gleam, when the young and extraordinary person I have described, made up to me. I had thought him drunk; but he was not—it was all assumed. We entered immediately into conversation, and he made me acquainted

with his resolution of stealing away from the frolic whilst the company slept. In this he was joined by me, and we were upon the point of putting our resolution into execution, when a sudden gleam of lightning shone in upon us, and two or three large pieces of hail, or rather ice, came down with the force and velocity of shot. All at once, the waters of the linn began to tumble about in an unusual manner—the Gullet, or Gray Mare's Tail, immediately above us, presented, even through the shade of night, a fearful projection of flood; the gullets roared and choked, and accumulated sticks, and turf, and heath, in their descent; and, ere a single individual could be aroused, the whole erection on which the whole gang were sound sleeping, was swept down the flood. Piteous was indeed the picture, and terrible the screams; but after the obstruction behind which the waters had accumulated gave way, the stream narrowed in its course, and many were left on dry land, almost without any efforts of their own. The fearless stranger was everywhere—he seemed now to be amphibious; and Neptune, too, was of the greatest service. I myself was not awanting either in courage or enterprise; and so it came to pass, that, in a few seconds, all had mustered, save one, the buxom and frank-hearted Ellen Elliot. The father raved, and dashed anew into the gullets. "Search Hell's Caldron!" was the almost universal cry. This was a terrible pool, some way down the stream. My young friend flew off; and I saw him leap some twenty or thirty feet into the black and boiling flood; he came up again exhausted, but exclaiming—"She is here! she is here!" Her father's plunge was simultaneous with the last words; down they both went together, and up they brought betwixt them poor Ellen Elliot. She was apparently dead; but, being laid on the brink of the pool, with her head downwards, much water escaped from her mouth. "She lives! she lives!" exclaimed parent and

lover at once; "oh, kindle a fire!" It was done, I never knew how, as if by magic. Spirits from a small flask in her father's side-pocket were made use of first externally, and latterly internally. Ellen awoke in terrible pain, she travailled fearfully into life; but at last she became sensible, and her first words were—"Bless me! what a terrible dream I have had!"

All is well that ends well. Ellen Elliot, the fair gipsy, is now Lady Whithaugh; the old man in his dotage having taken it into his head to marry again, though he was at the time a grandfather. She is one of my most steady customers, and I have no doubt that, when the old, kind-hearted, and easy-tempered laird shall have taken his leave, she may very soon after take her leave of widow-hood—and why not? Then will be "a wedding," and there (perhaps) may be the writer and the reader of these *chapters!* Amen!

CHAPTER IV.

As I was wending my way from the hospitable mansion of Whithaugh, up Hermitage Water, I was decoyed, by the near appearance of the old castle, to deviate a little from the straight but steep and difficult road to Hawick, to visit the ruins of this old Border keep—where Queen Mary once lodged, and Bothwell once met her—where still sleeps the stern ghost of Soulis, and the tremendous bones of the Count of Baldar. As the stream abounded in fish, I undid my pack, and, from the upper corner, extracted a fishing-rod, which I had purchased at Kendal, and amused myself, for an hour or two, in this most fascinating amusement. Alas! I have lived to see other times and other circumstances!—rivers without fish, and fishers

without spirit: the one spoiled of their finny inhabitants by every chemical abomination, and the other contented with a brace of parr or a triad of minnows. But to my narrative. I soon filled a bag which I carried for the purpose, and was at last compelled to give up the sport, from my inability to carry any additional weight. By this time, I had reached the old castle, and taken an eye measurement of its meaningless and monotonous architecture. Strength and security seem to have been the only objects pursued in its erection. But time had destroyed the one, and the other had ceased to be an object. I was on the point of leaving this keep—with many suitable reflections on the changes which time had wrought since Soulis roasted his foes, or cut them to pieces in the dungeon with the saw-mill—when I thought that I perceived a little thread of blue smoke escaping through the loose stones by which the interior of the ruined walls was occupied. This naturally excited my suspicion that there were more doings going on than I was aware of; so, depositing my trouts and my pack on the green bank of the Hermitage Water, I began to peer and poke about, with the end of my fishing-rod, amongst the stones. Neptune, too, had smelt a rat, and was busy, nose, and feet, and tongue, in assisting me in some mighty discovery. But all our efforts were in vain: the smoke ceased to issue, if indeed it had been smoke at all; and, although Neptune encompassed the old tower as often as Moses did the city of Jericho, yet still the immense walls stood true to their foundation; and, night coming on, we were compelled, though reluctantly, to leave the spot. Having determined to reach Hawick this night, I pushed on, there being good moonlight, though the evening was cold; and Neptune, as usual, kept on the advance, giving me timely intimation of whatever might, or might seem, to approach us. At or near the top of the ridge which separates the vale of the Hermitage from that

of the Kitterick, there stood, and perhaps still stands, a small public-house, built for the accommodation of such travellers as pass this way, dreary and difficult as it is. Into this, Neptune and I thrust our noses, and found a large family of children gathered around a blazing peat fire. We took our position immediately by the fire, and learned from the children that their mother was milking the cow—that their father had been killed in a quarry some months ago—and that there was a great number of fine-dressed gentlemen *ben* the house. The mother, a decent, melancholy-looking woman, soon entered, with the milk-stoup in her hand, and immediately proceeded to replenish the gill-stoup with a very different beverage, for the use of her ben-house customers.

"She didna ken weel what to mak o' them," she said; "but she thought, by their way o' speaking, and their dress, and ither accoutrements, they were maybe limbs o' the law—the deil's agents, excisemen—wha wadna let a puir body live, if they could prevent it."

At this time, one, who seemed to be the commander of the party, entered the kitchen, manifestly flustered with drink; and, seeing my fish-bag lying on the dresser, immediately seized it, exclaiming, "By G—! what have we got here?" However, he was soon disabused, if he imagined it to contain any illicit commodity; and, slipping a half-crown into my hand (which I willingly accepted), he ordered the fish to be immediately prepared for his supper, and that of his companions. They were, indeed, a jolly company, and, after a little while, invited me to partake of the produce of my own sport, and of a due qualification of whisky. In the course of an hour or two, we got exceedingly well acquainted; and I found, at last, from several incidental observations, that they had received information of an illicit still being in the neighbourhood, and were about to surprise those engaged in it

so soon as the moon should set, and their approach might be covered by the darkness.

Upon finding how the land lay, it immediately occurred to me that my uncle would have contrived to turn this incident to his professional advantage. It was manifest that, although their information extended to the whereabouts, they were ignorant of the exact spot where the illicit manufacture of whisky was, in all probability, going forward. In fact, they were led to believe that an old shieling, or shepherd's hut, constructed out of a mountain cairn, was probably the place where the work was proceeding. I opened my mind to them somewhat cautiously, by proposing that they should deal with me in such goods as my pack, so recently replenished at Manchester, would supply. They were all very shy, and expressed their *contempt* indeed of any such preposterous proposal. But, when I hinted that I was in possession of such information as might lead to the accomplishment of their object, they took at once at the bait, and agreed that, not only they, but their wives and families, should be supplied from my stores. Fancy waistcoats, watch-chains, twelve-bladed knives, razors, snuff-boxes, and pocket-books, were immediately secured, and handsomely paid for; and Neptune and I (for I verily believe he understood the whole transaction) had the pleasure of making a very considerable profit, by gaining at least 100 per cent. upon the whole concern. About 11 o'clock—for they were now impatient to secure their prize—we advanced, seven strong (exclusive of Neptune), upon the old tower of Hermitage.

But our approach had been anticipated, and the bird was flown. Some friendly imp, one of the family where we had so recently been convened, had probably given the necessary intimation to the illicit distillers; and, after much searching, and some curious discoveries of dark passages, and dungeons half filled with rubbish, we found a

cask or two of recently distilled spirit, with a few vats or tubs which had not been removed. It was manifest, however, from what we had discovered, that my information had been correct, and that, though flown, the bird would not be at any great distance. The whisky was removed to the public-house which we had just left; and, when we were in the act of returning upon our footsteps, we were met by a bare and curly-headed callant, about twelve years of age, who seemed inclined, when too late, to avoid any encounter. This excited our suspicion; and he was immediately secured, and questioned hard, whether he knew anything about the distillery in the Auld Tower.

"Na," said the urchin, "I ken naething about tilleries; but I ken weel there's something no canny about the place."

"What makes you think so, my man?"

"Ou, I dinna ken—I reckon it will be Auld Soulis' ghost; for he was an awfu wicked man, my mither says, and canna get rest in his grave at nae rate. I hae seen lichts about the auld place mysel."

And hereupon the rascal looked about him, as if afraid to speak out, and, in a low voice, gave us to understand that he had just met an awesome sight: it rowed owre the body, and owre the body, and rumbled away down the linn into the miller's house yonder. It was for a' the warl' like a whean corn-sacks, dyed black, and clinking ane against anither."

"Why, man, corn sacks dinna clink."

"Maybe no; but the deil's sacks are different. I reckon they wadna stand fire, unless they clinked."

There was no resisting this logic; so our informant was desired to show us the direction in which the apparition had gone. He pointed to a glen or linn on Hermitage Water, and to a light which flitted before us, appearing and disappearing at intervals. Down the glen we instantly

rushed, through some brushwood, and along a narrow pass. When we had reached the mill-steading, the light had disappeared; and, on investigation, our informant likewise. We found the miller still at work, and not a little surprised at our untimely and really unwelcome visit. It was manifest now, that we had been imposed upon by the knowing urchin, who, to give time for escape to the illicit traders, had trumped up the ghost story, well knowing that a direct information might have been suspected. In a word, we were completely out; and, where the distillers betook themselves, whether across the Border, or into some of the almost inaccessible mountains of Eskdalemuir, remains to this day a secret. However, I had made my market, and earned additional patronage by a chance adventure, which was quite in my uncle's way, and gave me assurance that, by pursuing a similar course in future, I should undoubtedly prosper.

My next advantageous hit was made at Moffat. To this favourite resort of the invalid, the idle, and the wealthy, there had been added this season a dinner, given by the advocates in Edinburgh to the future *author* of the poems of Ossian. Macpherson had just published some fragments of the Gaelic poetry, and had excited the attention of the learned world, by his announcing that, if he had the means, he would collect through the Highlands many larger and more valuable works of Ossian and other bards. I had been lucky enough to have purchased, when at Glasgow, a cheap remnant of the Macpherson tartan, having heard that it would take in England—but I was mistaken; and I could not prevail upon a single gentleman or lady of any note, betwixt Carlisle and Manchester, to patronise it.

Their patronage, in my trade, as in most others, is everything. Only get some celebrated country belle to sport a particular and uncommon pattern at a market or at church, and the fate of your napkin-web is fixed. Only get the

laird's eldest son to appear in the gallery, at church, in a waistcoat of a particular stripe and combination of colours, and every boor in the parish will purchase the like, at three or four prices. Only get a bride, on her wedding-day, to sport the newest ribbon, and your box is immediately emptied. It is thus that pedlar profit is realized, and a certain degree of notoriety, if not popularity, is obtained. I had got a waistcoat made, for my own use, out of this bit of unsaleable tartan—not, indeed, at the time anticipating any advantage, but the ordinary wear, from the garment. But, as good fortune would have it—and she has much to say in all professions—this very waistcoat was, in a sense, the making of me. I appeared in the town of Moffat in this tartan waistcoat, and had the good fortune, as I stood opposite to the inn-door where the company were to dine, adjusting my pack, and preparing to expose my goods to public view, to be observed from the window by Macpherson himself. He immediately announced the fact of the nature of the tartan which I wore to the gentlemen around him. They immediately began to wonder if the pedlar had any more of the same pattern in his pack; and, from one thing to another, it was agreed, at last, to address me on the subject. Down they came—for they had yet half-an-hour to wait for dinner; and, having made the necessary inquiries, were answered, somewhat shyly, by me, that I "didna ken but I micht hae a wee bit o' the same web." (In fact, I had upwards of two hundred yards deposited snugly in a friend's house, as I passed to England, besides the remnant carried along with me!) So I opened out my supply, and, in a few seconds, I sold the whole of it.

Next day, my pack was exposed at the principal well; and, to my no small delight, I saw Macpherson himself, with upwards of a score of advocates, all sporting the tartan. The thing took like wildfire; piece after piece,

(always the last!) I produced and sold; and had I been possessed of double, or even ten times the quantity, I verily believe I might have sold it, at any price. The very shepherd lads, from Queensberry and Errickstane, were down upon me, coaxing and urging me to let them have a waistcoat-piece, at any price. But the more fixed merchants of the place saw my advantage; and, by dismissing an express to Glasgow, in two or three days had their windows filled with the Macpherson. The fever, however, was over. Macpherson himself, waistcoat and all, had set out on his celebrated Highland search; the advocates had returned to their briefs; and the Moffat haberdashers had reason to regret their hasty proceedings in this matter. I had, however, realized a round sum of profit—not less than forty pounds—on this hit; and was content to limit my sale to the more ordinary commodities of my pack, for the rest of the time which I sojourned here.

From Moffat, I took the road, across the hills, to Durrisdeer. At this time, the famous M'Gill was minister of this parish. He was a man celebrated, in his day, for fervency in preaching; for marrying a Miss Goodfellow, (who had paid for his education, and was on the wrong side—I don't say of fifty, but at least of seventeen;) and for his extensive powers and experience in *haggis*-eating. The "Kirkton" of Durrisdeer—a small cluster of houses around the church—has been celebrated by Burns, in his "Tam o' Shanter"—

> "And at the Lord's house, even on Sunday,
> Thou drank wi' *Kirkton* Jean till Monday."

This parish is principally mountainous, and, consequently, pastoral; and the shepherds and sheep-farmers were, at the time of which I speak, in the habit of transacting their worldly affairs, after church time, on the sabbath evenings. This traffic was carried on in small, thatched ale-houses, some of which still remain, kept in general, by old women,

(one of whom lived to see 114 years!) and, in one particular exception, by a jolly young lass, yclept "Kirkton Jean." Nobody knew Jean better than Burns; and though, in his admirable poem, he places her near the Doon, yet, in fact, she was a nymph of the Carron, and a parishioner of Durrisdeer. It grieves me sore to say it, but Jean, though a stanch and steady believer and kirk-goer, though a great favourite with the minister, and with all the younger part of the plaided mountaineers, was detested by many decent women, and, in particular, by Mrs. M'Gill, who said she could not bear the sight of her. Her house, however, was much resorted to, and her company, as well as her ale, much sought after; and, when I reposed my pack on Jean's chest-lid, she gave me a hearty welcome, and, telling the old, blind body, her grandmother, that here was the pedlar, greeted me in the most kind and couthy manner possible. It was not my usual wont to put up in a public-house, where I had to pay for my food and bed; but I had my reasons in this case, as the reader will see anon. I arrived on the Tuesday of the sacrament, and attended sermon on Thursday and Saturday, as well as on Sunday.

Monday, however, came at last; and it was towards this Monday that I was looking during all the previous days; for this Monday was, in fact, the great market day of the parish. After M'Gill had preached in the open air to a vast multitude, (for he was the most popular preacher of the presbytery,) man, wife, and wean, master, servant, merchant—all classes and denominations of Christians—were immediately up to the ears in drink and traffic, buying, selling, hiring, *niffering*, as if religion and its observances had been unknown amongst them. The mind of man is a *queer* concern—at least, the heart, on the best authority, is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" and, really, the "Kirkton" of Durrisdeer, in the days of M'Gill, and on the Monday of the sacrament in particular, but too

manifestly exhibited the truth of this observation. I had placed my pack on a stand, by the kirk-stile; and, as the congregation dispersed, they had one and all an opportunity of seeing my goods in a state of full display. I had no rival, unless a very decent old woman might be considered as such. She sold a few articles of dress, such as stockings and plaids, all of her own and her daughter's manufacture; but mine were Manchester and Glasgow goods of the very newest fashion, and worn by every lady and gentleman of quality betwixt the two great marts. As the evening advanced, Jean's house became more and more difficult of access. My station was what is termed the spence, or the mid-room or closet, betwixt the kitchen and the *ben*. There I stood, with my ell-wand in my hand, measuring off waistcoat-pieces, displaying shawls, and exhibiting watch-chains and knives, till late in the evening. Some moorland farmers purchased largely on credit—a mode of dealing which I greatly relished, for two reasons: first, because it gave me an opportunity of visiting them in their mountain homes; and, secondly, because I could then with a safe conscience, or, at least, without challenge, charge double the original price. I need not, and I shall not, proceed with the sequel of the evening's events. From Jean, I learned that old Fingland, who was now a widower, had actually asked her in marriage; and that, in a few days, she should, in all probability, be Mrs. Gibson. The poor, doited, drunken body had a good farm from the Duke of Buccleuch; and, having got rid of his family by his first spouse, thought himself entitled to enter anew into the hallowed and often-tried state. He lived to repent his precipitancy and indiscretion; for Jean ruined him in a few months, and making a moonlight flitting, was afterwards found in the Grassmarket of Edinburgh, mistress of the public-house called the Harrow. But here my narrative must conclude for the present.

DUNCAN SCHULEBRED'S VISION OF JUDGMENT.*

WELL, it is always the same. We are fed by the moralities just as we are by potatoes. We must be always repeating the dose to keep the world in order, and thus it is that we go on. We see many examples of the extraordinary discovery of evil designs attempted to be concealed by all the craft of cunning man; nay, it is impossible to doubt, even with the many cases before us of the apparent success of criminal schemes, that it is a part of God's providence to lay open the secret actings—often the secret thoughts—of those who contravene his laws. The modes by which this purpose is fulfilled are as various as the designs themselves; and though some of them may not appear to be consistent with the seriousness and gravity of an avenging and punishing retribution, we are not, on that account, to doubt their authority or undervalue their effect. Now, we have a case to record of an extraordinary and ludicrous discovery of roguery, which, as well on account of its truth as the moral which, amidst all its grotesqueness, it inculcates, deserves to be remembered. It may do good too to that "muckle ne'er-do-weel," Human Nature, who is still enjoying his grin at the schoolmaster, the philanthropist, and the bible.

In that manufacturing town which has lately risen to considerable eminence, called Dunfermline, there lived,

* The vision here recorded will carry a greater interest to the reader, when he knows that it is not a *mere* fancy. Many still living can recognize in the narrative all the circumstances of the real adventure. We think proper thus to authenticate our tale, to prevent it from being classed among current versions (taken from our own original), which have no more foundation than may be claimed for other good stories.—ED.

some time ago, a person of the name of Duncan Schulebred, by trade a weaver—or, as he chose rather to be called, a manufacturer, a term which the inhabitants love to apply to every man who can boast the property of a loom and its restless appendage. We believe the people of that town to be as honest and industrious as those of any mercantile place in the kingdom; but they have too much good sense to think of claiming for their entire community, a total exemption from the inroads of dishonesty and deceit—vices which prevail in every corner of this land. Unhappily, the individual we have mentioned had allowed himself to become a slave to those evil propensities which are concerned in the collecting together of ill-gotten wealth, and never left any feasible plan unattempted, which might present any chance of gratifying the ruling passion by which he was mastered. He was a little man, with a florid complexion, and the small twinkling eye which almost invariably accompanies cunning. His walk was that of a man accustomed to carry under his left arm a web of huckaback, and in his right hand a staff ellwand; and his style of speech, bland, conciliating, and persuasive, was derived from the habit of wheedling customers into exorbitant terms. He was a great coward, as well physical as moral—the consequence, doubtless, of being a dishonest trader. Altogether too contemptible to be hated, his greatest enemy was his own conscience, of which he stood in such terrible awe, that his wife was often obliged, during the dark hours of the reign of that mysterious agent, to rise and light a lamp for the purpose of exercising the spirit which, seated on his heart, tormented him with the gnawing inflictions of its pain.

This trick of his conscience had hitherto been unable to prevent Duncan from using his short ellwand, and acting dishonestly. The moment he got into daylight and active life, he, like all other cowards, despised the enemy from which

he thought himself at the time safe. In a strong-minded man, conscience produces resolution; in a weak, it gives rise merely to fears and vacillation. It is not often that greedy, cunning men are given to intoxication; yet we are obliged to add this vice to the character of Duncan Schulebred, who, exhibiting, however, the one vice in the other, never failed to get intoxicated, if he could effect his purpose at the cost of his neighbour—a result he often achieved, by leaving the tavern after he had got enough —on pretence of returning in a few minutes to the company of his unsuspecting victim.

Like many others of the peripatetic manufacturers of Dunfermline, Duncan Schulebred sold through the country the cloth he fabricated at home; so that, for one half, the winter, of the year, he *sat*, and for the other, the summer, he *travelled*. By the same means and ratio, Duncan Schulebred was one half of the year sober, and the other inebriated; for he could fleece no pot companion in his native town, where he was known; while, throughout the country, he could walk deliberately out of every ale-house on the road, and leave his travelling companions to pay for his drink, in exchange for that society which they had enjoyed.

Now, in the course of his journey, this individual had occasion, during the latter end of a summer, to be in Edinburgh, where he usually sold a considerable part of his stock. During the day, he had been in treaty with a person of the name of Andrew Gavin, a pettifogging writer, residing near the Luckenbooths, for the sale of a web of linen, which the latter, like a trout with a bait on a clear day, approached and examined, and looked at and felt, and yet still seemed irresolute in his determination to be caught. The weaver's twinkling eye saw and admired the gudgeon; the linen, to a *safe* extent, was unrolled, its texture felt with a "miller's thumb," its qualities extolled, and its price wondered at by him who fixed it and smiled

inwardly at his profit and the trick by which he realized it. The unwary purchaser, though a man of the law, was at last caught—the bargain was struck, the money paid; and all that remained was, that Duncan Schulebred, in addition to cheating him in the manner to be explained, should, after his usual practice, get drunk at the expense of his customer.

The two parties accordingly repaired to a tavern known by the name of The Barleycorn, where they sat down deliberately, to indulge in a deep potation. In the midst of their orgies, the customer, who had a humour of his own, took many "rises" out of his companion, who submitted to his fun, in consideration of his determination to leave him to pay "the score," which would put "the laugh on the other side." As they went on in their potations, Duncan Schulebred gradually drifted from one condition of evil to another. Originally his desire was simply to cheat the writer as a man. This was mere vulgar selfishness. He would have "done" any man after the same fashion, because it was his nature. But in this instance, he was concerned in the purpose of cheating a pettifogger, whose very occupation it was to cheat every poor litigant that came in his way. Here was a great occasion for Duncan Schulebred. He felt another motive prompting him to the gratification of his wickedness, and that was pride—the pride of circumventing those who circumvent others. Ah, Duncan Schulebred! you never thought of the ugliness of this peculiar aggravation of sin, when the evil genius rejoices in itself—when it is puffed up with the glory of exaltation, when instead of being checked by conscience, it is rather inspired by conscience "turned back side fore—all the wrong way." Neither did he consider that the said conscience has an ugly trick of springing round into the normal state, with a jerk not over pleasant to sinners. But even here Duncan Schulebred did not stop, for his

pride of overcoming the "devil's limb," was inflamed by revenge, in consequence of the pettifogger having traduced Dunfermline; not that Duncan Schulebred had any patriotism, even in Dr. Johnson's sense of that virtue; but that he felt all the hits as directed against himself, just as every knave is always trying on the cap, and declaring that it is no fit. Behold selfishness, pride, and revenge, all met in one purpose; and as probably the writer had as many motives for attempting, by urging Duncan to drink, to enlarge the bill—the two were antagonists worthy of each other.

Their wordy war only made the writer and the weaver more thirsty; every argument was followed by a draught, which slaked at once both thirst and revenge. The more they drank the warmer they grew in defence of their respective towns, till they came to that condition of topers, when, by the mere operation of their potations, they become unable even to *dispute*. All confirmed drunkards have in their drunkenness some ruling principle, which, however far gone they may be, regulates their wayward movements. The writer's habit was to sit when he thought he could not stand—one which many sober men might do well to adopt. The weaver's, again, was to *walk* when he wished not to stand the reckoning—a prudent maxim which never left him, even when all other ideas had been washed from his brain. It was now about one o'clock in the morning, and they had drank so much that neither of them could tell—for neither had any interest in a matter which did not seem to concern his pocket—how much would require to be paid; it was enough for Duncan Schulebred, that he knew that something, and not little, *must* be paid—and now was the time for escape.

"We were speakin o' the law," said Duncan Schulebred, winking with cunning and hiccuping with drink—"I fancy they never refuse siller at the *bar* here, ony mair than they

do in Dumfarlan. There is only this difference atween the twa—that the folk wha resort to *your* bar pay when they enter, we (hiccup) pay as we gae oot. Rest yersel there till I cast up the bill, and if I hae ony *plea* wi' the landlord, ye can come and plead it."

"That's kind, Duncan," said the writer—"it will be the only plea I ever had from a Dunfermline weaver. If I gain it, we must have a—another gill."

"Twa o' them," replied Duncan, trying to rise. "We maun, at ony rate, hae (hiccup) the stirrup-cup, ye ken"—laughing and twinkling again his reeling eyes.

"O yes, but I—I fancy I must pay for *that*, seeing you are the traveller, and—and are besides to pay all this tremendous bill, that lies, doubtless, on the bar like a—a lawyer's memorial."

"Ye're an example o' an honest, ay, a generous writer," said Duncan Schulebred—wha could hae thocht ye wad hae offered to pay the stirrup-cup? I'll send yer wife a piece o' dornock for that, as weel as a screed o' huckaback and harn, to keep up a gratefu' recollection o' me after I'm awa. I'll no be a minute at the bar; for it's a place (hiccup) I dinna like."

"Here," cried the writer, riping his pocket—"take with you and pay at the same time the price of the stirrup-gill—one settling will serve all."

"Ye're richt, Mr. Gavin," replied Duncan Schulebred, receiving the money; "but that's a sma sum (hiccup) in comparison o' what I hae to pay; but it's pleasant to discharge the obligations o' honour."

Now, the wily huckaback manufacturer was, as he spoke, approaching the corner where his staff ellwand lay—an article he stood more in need of at that time (short measure as it was) than ever, on any other occasion of *taking off*, he had encountered. The recourse to it for the purpose of merely going to the bar, could not fail to raise suspicions

in the mind of the writer; but then, again, was he to lose a *short* measure, which, getting into the hands of a writer, might be sent—in revenge of the trick he had already played him, in selling a web of linen damaged in the heart, and that he was about to play—to the public authorities, who would hunt him to Dunfermline, and ruin him by the exposure? Not he. He besides required it for his support, for he could scarcely stand. In this dilemma, he had again recourse to his wits.

"I'm no sure aboot thae folk ben the hoose," said Duncan Schulebred, holding up the ellwand. "They may try to cheat me, seein I'm a simple cratur, besides being twa *sheets* i' the wind—(hiccup)—dinna ye think that I should tak my stick i' my hand, as a kind o' lawburrows and protection? No to say I would think o' usin't, but simply to keep the publican in awe, and within just and lawfu measure."

"Take it with thee, take it with thee, man," said the writer. "Say it is a—a Dunfermline baton, the sign of your constableship, and you will find the bill two inches shorter."

"Ingenious cratur!" ejaculated Duncan, with a hiccup, and the old leer of his grey eyes. "A law plea never can fail, surely, in the hands o' a man wi' sic a power o' suggestion as ye hae. But ye forget that Dumfarlan batons are no sae lang as Dumfarlan ellwands—(hiccup)—the power o' authority there's short, but the reach o' oor honesty's prodigious. That's a guid sign: our batons are short because we are quiet and civil, and our ellwands are lang because we are honest. Wad ye believe it, noo, that that ellwand o' mine, in spite o' the wear and tear o' walkin wi't, is a haiil inch different frae yer Edinburgh yards?"

This attack against the honesty of Edinburgh roused the blood of the writer, and another wordy battle was like to commence; but Duncan Schulebred saw at once, that, if he put off more time, the people of the house might, from

the lateness of the hour, come and insist upon the reckoning on the spot—a measure which all his wits would not enable him to counteract. The open mouth of the writer was therefore shut, by a few conciliatory words from the aggressor:—

"I dinna say, Mr. Gavin," added Duncan Schulebred, "whether the inch belanged to Dumfarlan or Edinburgh. Ye may tak the benefit o' a *presumption* in yer ain favour till I come back. Mony ane o' yer tribe stick langer by a presumption than that, and, till it grows into a fact, it canna injure an honest man like me. Guid"—(he was going to add "night," and leered grotesquely at his own imprudence)—"guid—(hiccup)—guid luck to my speedy settlement o' the lawin!"

Then Duncan Schulebred staggered to the door, which he opened so gently that the writer might, if he had not been drunk, have suspected him of foul play. His foot was scarcely heard on the passage; but a sound, as if from the end of the stairs, indicated that some one had missed a step. No notice of it was taken by the writer, who sat with his eye fixed on the candle, concocting, like a good poet, one of those works of imagination called a preliminary or dilatory defence. Formerly, these works of fancy were very rife among lawyers, and, before the judicature act, they used to reach a second or even a third edition, under the form of "amended defences," "re-amended defences," and so forth. They are not now so much in favour, though the fancy which produces them is still as vivid as ever. How long Andrew Gavin sat dreaming over his intended work we cannot say; but never was poet more rudely, importunately, and unpleasantly roused from his dream, by the hand of a messenger-at-arms, than was the unsuspecting victim of Duncan Schulebred's treachery, as he was called upon by the landlord to pay the bill. He had no money upon him—the small sum he had given to the weaver to

pay the last or stirrup gill, and which the varlet had carried away with him, having been all his remaining cash, after paying the price of the linen. He requested the importunate landlord to wait a little, to ascertain if Duncan would return; but the man wished to get to bed; and Andrew's credit being somewhat worn, like that of many others of his overdone profession, the publican insisted upon him leaving his watch, as a pledge for the payment of the money. The writer's pride—a quality never awanting in the race, especially when they're in liquor—was roused; he roared; he refused to *impignorate*, as he called it, his watch; he swore that he would rather remain in durance all night than succumb to the unreasonable demand of the publican. The man was as resolute as he, and, without saying a word, turned the key in the lock, and left the writer to dream over his legal works of fancy in the dark.

Meanwhile, the wily Duncan Schulebred, having recovered from a fall on the last step of the stair—produced by that impatience of slight obstacles which seizes an ambidexter at the successful termination of a well-concerted and better-executed scheme—proceeded down the Canongate. He was out and out intoxicated; but the wish to cheat, so long as it was in operation, kept his mind from that confusion which, his purpose being effected, immediately seized him. He was not certain of the direction in which he was moving; but he was satisfied with the idea that he was going *from* the sign of The Barleycorn, and any destination was better than that. A confused intention of sleeping all night in the town of Leith, with the view of catching the Fife boat in the morning, at last wrought its way through the cloud which overhung his mind; and having found himself as far as the Water-gate, he continued his progress until he came to what is called the Easter Road, leading directly down to the Links. The air produced its usual effect upon a man who was filled to the throat

with liquor; and every step he took he found himself getting more and more unsteady, and more and more unfit for prosecuting his journey. He was, however, still conscious of his condition, and felt great alarm lest some one should assail him, and take from him his money. By and by, even his consciousness left him, and he rolled from side to side, engrossing, for his own particular ambulation, the whole breadth of the road. Several times he came down, and, being unable to rise without many repeated attempts, lay on the ground for considerable periods. The necessity of motion of some kind is the last idea parted with by an intoxicated traveller; and Duncan Schulebred still retained it, even after he had lost his ellwand, his chief means of support. On and on he struggled, falling, and lying, and rising, and to it again, till he got at length as far as the green called the Links of Leith—an open space always as disadvantageous to the drunk man as it is pleasant to the sober. A road with two sides may be got over—the dikes keep him on; but an extended area of grass, with radiating openings all round, is a kind of place which a man in Duncan Schulebred's position, without the rudder or compass of consciousness, must always view with great uneasiness. Accordingly, Duncan Schulebred did beat about in this large circle for several hours, and at last entered a street which leads down to that called Salamander Street.

Having reached the south side of this street, Duncan Schulebred kept close by the walls and houses, stepping along, unwilling to trust himself again to open space. Alas! he knew nothing of whither he was progressing; he had lost all recollection of what he had been engaged in; he was unconscious of what he was doing; and he was utterly ignorant of all localities. As he moved past the houses, he came to an opening, and, staggering to a side, entered a small avenue into which it led, and proceeded along it, still holding by the wall, until he got into what he

thought was a large house. There he lay down, and fell in an instant into a sleep, disturbed by those frightful dreams that haunt the pillow of the dissolute and the wicked.

Having lain for hours, Duncan Schulebred began at last to show some signs of returning consciousness, rolling his body backwards and forwards, as if under the effect of a night-mare of the fancy, or of that more terrible night-mare of the conscience by which he was often at home so relentlessly ridden. And so he was. Frightful dreams had filled his mind with terrors; and, having produced a kind of half-waking state, were followed, as they usually were, by the gnawing of his old enemy. A dim recollection came on him of all the wickedness he had committed—the number of innocent individuals he had cheated by his short measure and his damaged linen; the shirking of publicans, the duping of travellers, his drunkenness, his lies, his false pretences—all his thoughts being accompanied by the terrors of his roused conscience, which whispered punishment by fire and brimstone, and filled his half-sleeping fancy with vivid images of the place of punishment. It is not unlikely that this half-waking, dreamy cogitation, was aided insensibly by the painful operation of external sense, conveying some dim intelligence of what was going on around him—the operations of glass-blowing on a great scale.

A large furnace was lighted, and blown up to a red heat; vivid flames shot forth from a fire, which was, from time to time, supplied with great quantities of fuel; at every blow of a large pair of bellows, the living light flashed through the space around, which was comparatively dark, from the disproportion between the large area, and the few lights yet lighted. Obscure-looking beings were occupied about the furnace, the light striking on their sallow faces, and leaving all again in an instant nearly dark; a number of others were busy in the distance, performing other

operations, dipping long tubes in some substance, and inflating a ball, till, red and glowing, it expanded into a fire globe. The dark beings were active in their movements, darting backwards and forwards between the furnace and the reservoirs, with the hot, red, glaring globes at the end of the tubes, and crossing and recrossing each other, in the dark obscure, so as to present the appearance of demons engaged in some mysterious doings of their avenging spirits. In all this, the fiery globes were the only appearances clearly discernible in continuation; the figures and faces of the individuals being only at intervals shown by the glare thrown upon them by the glowing furnace, as it responded to the loud murmuring bellow of the inflating and fire-producing blast.

This condition did not last long; Duncan Schulebred awoke to the full conviction of being in the very place of the damned. He heard the roaring of the bellows; then he saw huge red walls rising up to heaven; then his eyes turned round on that terrific furnace, vomiting forth its living fire, while the bearers of the burning globes, hurrying to and fro past him and around him, and plunging their fiery weapons into the receptacles, doubtless, of the condemned wicked—claimed, on every side, his rapt and terrified gaze. Fear prevented him from moving; his cogitations took the form of a soliloquy; and he communed with himself on his awful condition.

"Mercy on my puir soul!" exclaimed Duncan Schulebred, but so as not to let any eavesdropping devil hear him—"am I *here* at last? When I was in the body, how aften did I think and dream o' the bottomless pit?—can it be that I'm now in it? Alas! it's owre true! What hae I, a wicked cratur, now to expect frae thae fiends for a' the sins dune i' the body? But when did I dee? I dinna recollect the circumstance o' my death—dootless apoplexy—ay, ay, I was aye fear't for't. Yet did I no fa' doon the

stair o' The Barleycorn? I did—that's it—I had been killed by the fa'. Death's a sma' affair to this. What a fiery furnace for a puir sinner! See hoo the devils run wi' their burning brands, forkin them into thae pits, whar lie craturs in the same condition wi' mysel! But why do they no come to me? Ah! the furnace is for me. I see Satan himsel at the bellows, and it's no for ilka sinner *he* wad condescend to work. It's for Duncan Schulebred, wha cheated the folk by a short ellwand at the rate o' thirty-six inches o' claith a-week for fifteen years—wha drank, and lee'd, and deceived—wha committed sins redder than scarlet and mair numerous than the mots i' the sun—wha dee'd i' the very act o' cheating Andrew Gavin, by selling him a wab o' damaged linen, and leaving him to pay the bill at The Barleycorn. Alas! am I at last in this awfu place!"

As he ended, he heard pronounced in a hollow voice, by some Belphegor behind him:

> "Now, Duncan, thou wilt get thy fairin',
> For here they'll roast thee like a herrin'."

"Ay, ay!" groaned Duncan.

Then a dark figure appeared before him, holding in his hand one of the fiery globes:—"Where," cried he, "is the weaver who cheated the public at the rate of thirty-six inches of cloth per week, and died in the very act of cheating our *special friend*, Andrew Gavin the writer (for every writer is our special friend, and must be protected by us, so long as he writes lying defences and long memorials), by selling him damaged linen, and leaving him to pay his tavern bill? Where is the scarlet rogue, that we may burn out the red of his sins by the red fire of this glowing furnace?"

A loud yell uttered by the Mephistophileses and Asmodeuses was the reply to this speech, and went to the very heart of the devoted Duncan Schulebred. The principal,

followed by his demons, approached him; he was lying, shaking and groaning, upon his back, and looked at the legion, with their flaming brands, with an expression of countenance transcending anything that could be produced by mere earthly agony, or described by a mere goose quill of the upper world.

"What is thy name, sinner?" asked the Prince.

"Mercy on me!" ejaculated Duncan Schulebred, "I'm in for't now! An' please your excellent Majesty," replied he, in a voice scarcely audible, from the pure effect of terror, "Duncan Schulebred, wha, when in the upper warld, was by trade a puir weaver in the toun o' Dumfarlan. I did yer Honour some service i' my sma' way, and hope ye winna be sae ill to me as ye threaten. Oh, keep thae fierce fiends, wi' their burning torches frae me, and I'll confess to ye a' my crimes. Be mercifu' to a puir sinner!"

"What service didst thou ever do to me?" said Satan.

"I made ye some freens," replied Duncan Schulebred, still groaning. "I did a' that was i' my power to get the craturs i' the upper warld to drink wi' me till they were sae drunk that ye might hae run awa wi' them as easily as ye carried aff Doctor Faustus or danced awa wi' the exciseman. Oh, think o' that, and save me frae that awfu furnace!"

"Confess, sinner," said the Devil, "that thou didst that for the purpose of getting more easily quit of the tavern bills. Thou didst also cheat the lieges by a false measure."

"Lord, he kens everything," muttered Duncan—"I confess I did cheat the lieges; but I assure yer Majesty, upon my soul—now no muckle worth—that I never cheated ony o' yer Majesty's freens; for I aye dealt wi' honest folk. Surely that's a reason for some mercy."

"Recollect thyself, varlet," said Satan—"didst never cheat a writer?"

"How correct he is!" muttered Duncan Schulebred,

with a groan. "Ou ay—true, true—a' writers are yer Majesty's freens. I forgot. I did cheat Andrew Gavin, by sellin him a wab o' rotten linen, and leavin him to pay the lawin at The Barleycorn—a name your Majesty, dootless, weel kens."

"I think I should," replied Satan, "seeing *that* is *my* grain, wherewith I work greater wonders than ever came out of the mustard seed. This place is fed with barleycorns—we bait our hooks with barleycorns—we spread barleycorns under our men-nets—the very man who sang the praises of the grain, under the personification of 'John Barleycorn,' and of its juice, under the soubriquet of 'barley-bree,' took our bait; but a redeeming angel touched him on the fore part of the stomach, and made him throw it, and heaven now boasts that glorious prize."

"Miserable as I am, I'm very glad o't," said Duncan, whose fears began to decline. "I wadna like to see our darling poet in sic a place as this."

"Impudent varlet!" said the Devil. "In with him into the furnace! Yet, stay. How much money did you cheat our friend Andrew Gavin of?"

"I needna try to conceal it," said Duncan to himself. "He kens it as weel as I do. Here it is" (speaking out) "and some mair—ye may hae it a', if ye'll no consign me to that red-hot fiery furnace. Fearfu, fearfu place!"

"Count it out," said Satan.

Duncan complied with trembling hands and Beelzebub took up the money.

"That is a most precious commodity," said he. "They say, above, that our dwelling is paved with good intentions—they should rather say, that it is paved with gold, a metal with which the ancient infidels said heaven was constructed. Never was there a greater error. 'The root of all evil' cannot surely be found in the very birth-place of good."

"I ken, at least," said Duncan Schulebred "that it was gowd that brought me here. Cursed trash! It is the gowd, and no the puir sinners deceived by't, that should be put into the furnace. Weel, weel has it been ca'd the root o' a' evil. Oh, cursed dross! what am I to suffer for ye?

> 'Yon warld's gear, when I think on
> Its pride, and a' the lave o't;
> Fie! fie! on silly coward man,
> That he should be the slave o't.'"

"Doth the creature malign our staple commodity," said Satan, "and say it should be melted? Well, away with him, Asmody, to the furnace!—melt *him!*"

Now did Duncan scream for mercy, while the dark spirits laid hold of him, and proceeded to carry him to the mouth of the furnace, at last blown up into a fearful red heat. He continued to roar with very great vociferation, making all the cone ring, and casting about his legs and arms, like one distracted. Those who were not engaged in carrying him, brought within an inch of his face, their burning globes of glass, and made indications as if they would apply them to his body; the bearers, turning his head to the fiery volcano, laid it within a foot of the burning coal; the whole ceremony was accompanied by a chorus of really frightful yells, set up by the operators, and made to echo and reverberate throughout the area of the cone. Independently, altogether, of the conviction of being in the hands of the Evil One and his legions, the situation of Duncan, with his head within a foot of a furnace, and surrounded by wild-looking howling beings, intent apparently on his destruction, would have terrified a pretty stout heart; but he *truly* believed himself on the very eve of being punished for his crimes, by being thrust head-foremost into the burning furnace, from which no power could save him. And who could contemplate that position without horror?

His agony was, in short, inexpressible, except by screams; and it was cruelly prolonged by affected manœuvres, such as blowing the bellows, and stirring and restirring the coals, to make them burn more fiercely, for the more adequate reception of the greatest of human sinners that had ever been consigned to the pit.

Having held him for some time in this position, Satan, seeming to recollect himself, cried out—

"Meph, do thou get the red-hot pincers. We were oblivious. He has not confessed all his crimes. We will pinch him for a few hours before we consign him to the fire, which is not, at any rate, red enough for so great a sinner. Asmody, lay him down close to the furnace, and now, a pair of pincers for each leg and arm. We will make him cry as loud as I did myself when St. Dunstan had me by the nose."

Then was Duncan Schulebred laid before the furnace, screaming at the top of his voice, and his eyes rolling about like fiery balls. The pincers were brought and put into the furnace, and the bellows again sent forth their dreadful sound; the howling was increased; and all the dark spirits, as they uttered their yells, danced round him, waving their red globes, and every now and then bringing them within a few inches of his face. The pincers were getting hot apace, by the fierce blowing of the bellows; and one of the legion held the head of the victim so as to force him to contemplate the instruments of his torture. Still the confusion grew worse confounded—the noise of the blowing forge, the howling of the legion, the groaning and screaming of Duncan, the loud word of command of the Prince, all blending together; while the rapid motions of the dancers, and the rising and falling of the bellows, again made the eyes of the distracted being reel like those of a maniac.

This punishment was continued until it appeared that

the terrified Duncan Schulebred was about to faint. His cries ceased, and fear seemed to lose its effect over him. It was surely time to stop, as even amusement may be carried to the verge of death—and the unfortunate Duncan was more like death than life. The Prince accordingly gave the sign to his legion, and in an instant the bellows ceased to blow, and the men to dance, and all was as still as death. Apprehensive of having killed the victim by pure fright, the Prince, assisted by some of the crew, lifted him to a distance from the furnace, and having held up his head so as to get him to sit, some whisky was brought in by a Mephistophiles. As he sat pale and trembling, and looking wistfully about him, the chief actor filled up a glass of the spirits, and offered it to him. He seemed irresolute and timid—looking first at the whisky, then at the devils, and much at a loss what to think of his position. His grotesque appearance forced the chief actor to smile: the effect was instantaneous—Duncan caught the favourable indication, and took the glass into his hands.

"I didna think," said he, "that there was ony o' *this* kind o' liquor here. I expected naething but melted brimstone, said to be the staple drink o' your dominions. But is it really whisky? It's surely impossible—if the circumstance got wind aboon, that there was whisky in *these parts*, there wad be nae keepin folk out. How dinna ye spread the intelligence? Surely ye're no sae keen for recruits as ye were when ye danced awa wi' the exciseman."

"It is already known on earth that whisky was first brewed in Pandemonium," said the actor. "The nectar belongs to heaven, the wine to earth, and the whisky to the infernal regions. A thousand poets have sung about the drink of the gods, and a little old fellow—a Greek—who lies in one of these troughs, getting his wine-heated pate cooled with brimstone every five minutes, danced and sang the praises of wine till I got hold of him at the age of

eighty. The only poet who has let out the secret of whisky being first brewed in our regions was a person of the name of M'Neil, who sang—

> 'Of a' the ills puir Caledonia
> E'er yet pree'd, or e'er will taste,
> Brewed in Hell's black Pandemonia,
> Whisky's ill has scaithed her maist.'

I tried to get hold of the fellow, for his impudence in maligning our favourite liquor; but he wrote some sweet poems, and the gods took him under their wing."

"Ye were muckle indebted, I think, to Hector," replied Duncan Schulebred, "for tellin the folk that whisky was brewed here. It will save your Majesty a warld o' trouble; for customers, o' their ain accord, will come 'linkin to the black pit' in millions, if they're sure o' the *spark*."

"They *are* sure of the *spark*," replied the Prince. "But we give it here only as a medicine whereby we recover our patients that they may be the more able to feel our torments. The moment thou drinkest, the pincers will be applied."

"Then I beg leave to decline the liquor," said Duncan Schulebred, "I see nae use for fire baith ootside and in; besides, I hae renounced the practice o' drinkin at another person's expense—a tred I followed owre lang in the upper regions, to my sad cost this day."

"Thou hast paid for this with the money thou gavest me," said the actor.

"That's mair than I ever did upon earth," said Duncan with a leer which he could not restrain.

Now, it will have been seen that the truth had for some time been dawning upon the mind of Duncan Schulebred. He looked round and round him, and every look added fresh proof of the delusion under which he laboured. Peering into the face of Satan, he even was bold enough to smile, accompanying the act with one of his inimitable

leers. It was impossible to resist this look of sly humour; and the whole company broke out into a fit of laughter, which made all the cone ring again. Then seizing the whisky he looked round upon all the parties, and, bowing, said—

"Gentlemen, I'm obleeged to ye for the trouble ye hae taen on my account. I see now how the land lies; but though I ken the haill extent o' this awfu delusion, dinna think that the part ye hae played is a piece o' mere fun and humour, to form afterwards the foundation o' a guid story. Ye hae dune mair this mornin for the regeneration o' a puir sinner than was effected by a' the sermons I ever heard frae the pu'pits o' Scotland. I've confessed my crimes to ye, and I canna expect that this cone is to confine for ever my evil reputation. It maun gae abroad and condemn me, and ruin me; but" (lowering his voice seriously) "I will defy it to prevent me frae following the course I hae this day determined to pursue. Frae this hour henceforth, to that moment when it may please Heaven to tak me frae this warld, I shall be an upright, a sober, and a religious man; the folk I hae injured, cheated, and robbed, I will try to benefit to the utmost extent o' my puir ability; every day o' my life will be dedicated to the service o' the Almighty, and the guid o' his craturs. My first step will be to gang to Edinburgh, and pay back to Andrew Gavin the price o' the damaged linen he purchased frae me, and to settle the tavern bill at The Barleycorn, to assist me whereunto ye will dootless gie me back my siller. This resolution I confirm thus." And he flung the whisky into the furnace, which blazed up, a kind of holocaust, as a thanksgiving for the regeneration of a sinner.

Duncan Schulebred's money was paid back to him honestly, and the actors were well pleased that they had, out of their amusement, wrought so extraordinary a miracle. The regenerated man departed from the glass-works,

and proceeded, according to his intention, direct to Edinburgh. He called first at Andrew Gavin's house.

"Is Mr. Gavin within?" said he to Mrs. Gavin.

"My husband," said the disconsolate wife, "has not been at home all night. The last time I saw him was when he departed with you. What have you done with him? I fear some sad mischief has befallen him; for unless he is at a proof or after a *fugy*, he never stays out of his own house at night. But what kind of linen was that ye sold him?"

"It was a piece o' *rotten* linen I sauld him," replied Duncan Schulebred.

Mrs. Gavin looked at him in amazement.

"Ay, and," he continued, "your husband is dootless locked up in The Barleycorn, because he couldna—puir man!—pay the lawin that I should hae paid, and ran awa and left him to pay."

Mrs. Gavin's amazement was increased.

"Ay, and," continued he, "I hae cheated thoosands besides you and yer husband—a greater sinner than I hae been, ye wadna find between the Mull o' Galloway and John o' Groats. If I had got my due, I wad hae been hanged, or at least sent to Botany Bay."

"Are you mad, or do you glory in your wickedness?" said Mrs. Gavin.

"Nane o' the twa," said Duncan. "I am as wise as ye are; and, in place o' gloryin in my wickedness, I am as repentant as a decin martyr."

"Repentance is nothing without works," replied she.

"Warks!" ejaculated Duncan. "Bring, bring me the rotten linen."

The astonished woman went and brought the article.

"There's the siller," said Duncan, "I got fra yer husband for that wab. I'll sell it noo for what it is—a piece o' vile deception. Need ye a commodity o' that description?"

"I think I could find use for it," said Mrs. Gavin. "It has one good end, but you will come to an ill one when you"——"roll it down," she would have said, but Duncan caught her:—

"When ye cheat yer neighbour," added he. "Ye're quite right, madam; a rotten-hearted wab is just like a rotten-hearted man—they baith come to an ill *end*. Oh, hoo gratefu I am to thae glass-blawers, wha hae blawn awa my crimes, and converted and reformed me!"

"He is surely mad, after all," muttered Mrs. Gavin, to herself—"who ever heard of glass-blowers converting sinners? I have always understood that glass-blowers are free livers, and need repentance themselves as much as other folk. How could they convert you, man?"

"There are strange mysteries i' the warld," said Duncan; "but we will better let that subject alane. We only, after a', see 'as through a glass darkly.' Stick to the linen—what is it worth?"

Mrs. Gavin stated a price, Duncan accepted her offer, and the damaged linen was sold.

"Noo," said Duncan, "I'll send ye her husband."

"I will be obliged to you," said Mrs. Gavin; "and if you can get the glass-blowers to give him a blast, your kindness would be increased far beyond my poor powers of recompense.

"Ah, madam," said Duncan, "writers are owre well accustomed to *blasts o' the horn*, to care for ordinary wind-fa's. I ken nae better thing for an ill husband (no sayin that Andrew is liable to that charge) than a blast o' a wife's tongue. God be praised, Janet Schulebred will hae nae mair cause to lecture me! We will now live happily durin the remaining portion o' the time o' oor pilgrimage. I hae aye taen something hame to her. Last year I took some whisky bottles—probably made at the glass-warks o' Leith; this time I intend to tak a family Bible. Guid day, madam,

I'm awa to The Barleycorn; and frae that I gang to a Bible repository, and then hame."

He repaired to The Barleycorn. He saw the landlord standing at the door, with a sombre face. He had the key of the room in his hand, and looked the very picture of a jailor. He knew Duncan instantly, and was proceeding to seize him, when the latter surrendered himself with so much good humour that the publican gave up his purpose and smiled at the prospect of getting his money.

"You forgot to come back last night," said the man. "Mr. Gavin says that you were the principal debtor to me for my drink, and that he was merely surety or cautioner Is that true?"

"Perfectly true," replied Duncan. "I promised to pay the bill, and should hae paid the bill; but I was determined I wadna pay the bill. Accordingly, I ran awa for nae ither purpose than to avoid payin it."

"A trick ye'll no play a second time," said the publican seizing him.

"No," said Duncan, taking out the money, "seein I am come to pay ye plack and farthin. Let us adjourn to Mr. Gavin's prison."

"The vera place I intended to tak ye to," said the man.

They proceeded to the room where Andrew was confined, and found him sitting in a sombre fit of melancholy. As they entered, he looked at Duncan with an appearance of mixed anger and satisfaction. The latter feeling predominated, as his mind suggested that the poor weaver had been prevented by drunkenness from returning immediately to pay the bill, and had now come to make amends.

"I have been angry at you, Duncan," said he; "but I might have had more faith in your honour, than to doubt you, without better proof of dishonesty than not returning (when you were not able) to pay your debts."

"Ye couldna hae a better proof o' my dishonesty," replied Duncan, sternly; "for, last nicht, when I ran awa withoot payin the lawin, I had nae mair intention o' comin back than I had o' gangin doun to the bottomless pit."

Andrew looked at the speaker with the same amazement as was exhibited by his wife.

"How comes it, then," said the writer, "that thou hast returned here this morning?"

"I hae got some new *licht*," replied Andrew. "Ye ken—

> 'So long's the lamp hold's on to burn,
> The greatest sinner may return.'

I hae returned, no only to this tavern to pay my debt, but to a proper sense o' what is due to Heaven and to my fellow-creatures. I am a changed man, sir. Nae 'vision o' judgment,' penned by Southey or Byron, ever transcended that o' the bottle-blawers o' Leith."

The writer considered him mad, and trembled for the payment of the bill, which could not be extorted from a maniac. The tavern-keeper took a calmer view, and thought he was still drunk.

"What are ye starin at?" said Duncan. "Did ye never before see a repentant sinner? Bring yer bill, sir. And, Mr. Gavin, I refer ye to Mrs. Gavin for some information, regarding a wab o' rotten linen I sauld ye yesterday, bought back again, and sauld again to her this mornin."

The tavern-keeper brought the bill, which Duncan discharged.

"I cheated ye, Mr. Gavin, also o' the price o' the stirrup-cup."

"Let us drink it now," said Mr. Gavin—"Bring us a gill"—to the tavern-keeper.

The whisky was brought, and the writer took cleverly

his morning dram, a practice which the craft has latterly renounced, but which they should have recourse to again, as a glass of whisky is a good beginning to a day's roguery, and has, besides, sometimes the same effect upon the conscience that it produces on the toothache—stills the pain. A glass was next filled out for Duncan. He took it up and held it in his hand.

"Your fire's no sae guid as the ane I saw last nicht," he said to the tavern-keeper.

"It is only newly lighted," was the apology of the host.

"It may be the better o' that," said the other, throwing the whisky into the grate, and making the fire blaze up. "Sae should a' burnin, fiery liquors be used. They might then warm the outsides, in place o' burnin the insides o' sinners. Ye hae seen some o' the first acts o' my repentance. This is ane o' them. Ye may hear and sae mair, if ye consider Duncan Schulebred worthy o' yer consideration, and trace his conduct through this weary, wicked, waefu warld, during the remainin period o' an ill-begun but (I hope) weel-ended life."

ARCHY ARMSTRONG.

For thirty years Sandy Armstrong of the Cleughfoot had been one of the most daring and successful freebooters of his clan. His name was a sound of terror on the Borders, and was alike disagreeable to Scotch and English ears; for, like Esau, Sandy's hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him. His clan had been long broken and without a leader, and the Armstrongs were regarded as outlaws by both nations. Cleughfoot, in which Sandy resided, was a small square building of prodigious strength· around it was a court-yard, or rather an enclosure for cattle, surrounded by a massy wall, in which was an iron gate strong as the wall itself. The door of the dwelling was also of iron, and the windows, which were scarce larger than loop-holes, were barred. It was generally known by the name of "Lang Sandy's *Keep*," and was situated on the side of the Tarras, about ten miles from Langholm. Around it was a desolate morass, the passes of which were known only to Sandy and his few followers, and beyond the morass was a decaying but almost impenetrable forest. Sandy, like his forefathers, knew no law, save

> "The good old law—the simple plan—
> That they should take who have the power,
> And they should keep who can."

He had had seven sons, and of these five had fallen while following him in the foray, the sixth had been devoured by a blood-hound, and he had but one, Archy, his youngest, left, to whom he could bequeath his stronghold, a fleet steed, and his sword. Land he had none, and he knew

not its value: he found it more profitable to levy black-mail, to the right and to the left, on Englishman and on Scot; and he laughed at the authority of Elizabeth and of James, and defied the power of the Wardens of their Marches—"Bess may be Queen o' England," said he, "and book-learned Jamie, King o' braid Scotland, but Sandy Armstrong is lord o' the wilds o' Tarras."

On the death of Elizabeth, Sandy and his handful of retainers had been out in the raid to Penrith; in that desperate attempt, some of them had fallen, and others had been seized and executed at Carlisle. But Sandy had escaped, driving his booty through the wilds before him to Cleughfoot. On one side of the court-yard stood a score of oxen and six fleet steeds, and on the other was provender for them for many days. On the flat roof of Cleughfoot Keep sat Sandy Armstrong; before him was a wooden stoup filled with *aqua vitæ*, and in his hand he held a small quegh, neatly hooped round, and formed of wood of various colours. It had a short handle for the finger and thumb, was about two inches in diameter, and three quarters of an inch in depth, and out of this vessel Sandy, ever and anon, quaffed his strong potations, while his son, Archy, a boy of twelve years old, stood by his side, receiving from his parent a Borderer's education. But, leaving the freebooter and his son on the turret of their fastness, we shall also, for a few moments, leave Dumfriesshire, and carrying back our narrative for some weeks, introduce the reader to the ancient town of Berwick-upon-Tweed.

On Wednesday, the 8th of April, 1603, every soul in the good town of Berwick was up by daybreak;—wife and maiden flaunted in their newest gowns, with ample fardingales, and the sweating mechanic looked as spruce in his well brushed "jack," as a courtly cavalier. By sunrise, the cannon thundered from the ramparts. Before noon, the Marshal, Sir John Carey, at the head of the garrison,

composed of horse and foot, marched out of the town towards Lamberton, firing *feu-d'-joies* as they went, while the cannon still pealed and the people shouted. The thunder of the artillery became more frequent—the bells rang merrily—the volleys of the garrison became louder and more loud, as though they again approached, and "He comes!—He comes!" shouted the crowd; "Hurra! Hurra! —the King! the King!" The garrison again entered the town, they filed to the right and left, lining the street. In front of Marygate stood William Selby, the gentleman porter, with the keys of the town. The voice of the artillery, the muskets, and the multitude, again mingled together. James of Scotland and of England stood before the gate—Selby bent upon his knee, he placed the keys of the town in the hands of the monarch, who instantly returned them, saying, "Rise, *Sir* William Selby, an' saul o' me, man, but ye should take it as nae sma' honour to be the first knight made by James, by the grace of God, an' the love o' our gracious cousin, King o' England an' Scotland likewise." His Majesty, followed by the multitude, proceeded down Marygate, through the files of the garrison, to the market-place, where the worshipful Hugh Gregson, the mayor, his brother aldermen, the bailiffs, and others of the principal burgesses, waited to receive him. The mayor knelt and presented him with a purse of gold and the corporation's charter. "Ye are a leal and considerate gentleman," said the king, handing the purse to one of his attendants—"worthy friends are ye a'; and now take back your charter, an' ye sall find in us a gracious and affectionate sovereign, ready to maintain the liberty and privileges it confers upon our trusty subjects o' our town o' Berwick." Mr. Christopher Parkinson, the recorder, then delivered a set and solemn speech, after which the king proceeded to the church, where the Rev. Toby Mathews, Bishop of Durham, preached a sermon suited to royal ears.

On the following day, the demonstrations of rejoicing were equally loud, and his Majesty visited the garrison and fortifications; and as he walked upon the ramparts surrounded by lords from Scotland and from England, and while the people shouted, and the artillery belched forth fire, smoke, and thunder, the monarch, in order to give an unquestionable demonstration of his courage, in the presence of his new subjects, boldly advanced to the side of one of the cannon, and took the match from the hands of the soldier who was about to fire it. Once—twice—thrice, the monarch stretched forth his hand to the touch-hole, but touched it not. It was evident the royal hand trembled—the royal eyes were closed—yea, the royal cheeks became pale. At length the quivering match touched the powder, back bounded the thundering cannon, and back sprang the terrified monarch, knocking one of his attendants down—dropping the match upon the ground, and thrusting his fingers in his ears—stammering out, as plainly as his throbbing heart would permit, that "he feared their drum was split in twa!" Scarce had his Majesty recovered from this demonstration of his bravery, when a messenger arrived with the intelligence that the Armstrongs and other clans had committed grievous depredations on the Borders, and had even carried their work of spoliation and plunder as far as Penrith.

"Borders, man!" quoth the king, "our kingdom hath nae *borders* but the sea. It is our royal pleasure that the word *borders* sall never mair be used: wat ye not that what were the *extremities* or *borders* o' the twa kingdoms, are but the *middle* o' *our* kingdom, an' in future it is our will an' decree that ye ca' them nae langer the borders, but the *middle* counties. An' now, Sir William Selby, as we were graciously pleased yesterday by our ain hand, to confer on ye the high honour o' knighthood, take ye twa hundred and fifty horsemen, and gae ye up our middle counties, com-

manding every true man in our name, capable o' bearing arms, to join ye in crushing and in punishing sic thieves and rievers; hang ilka Armstrong and Johnstone amang them that resists our royal will—an' make the iron yetts o' their towers be converted into ploughshares. Away, sir, an' do your wark surely an' right quickly."

On the following day, Sir William Selby set out upon his mission; and before he had proceeded far, he found himself at the head of a thousand horsemen. They burned and destroyed the strongholds of the Borderers, as they went, and the more desperate amongst them who fell into their hands were sent in fetters to Carlisle.

It was early in May, and the young leaves, bursting into beauty and being, were spreading their summer livery over Tarras forest, and the breeze wafted their grateful fragrance over the morass; even on the morass itself, a thousand simple flowers, like fragments of beauty scattered in handfuls amidst the wide-spread desolation, peeped forth; and over the sharp cry of the wheeling lapwing rang the summer hymn of the joyful lark, when, as we have said before, Sandy Armstrong sat on the turret of Cleughfoot with his son by his side.

"Archy," said the freebooter, "this warld is turning upside down, an' honest men hae nae chance in't. We hear o' naething noo but law! law! law!—but the fient a grain o' justice is to be met wi' on the Borders. A man canna take a bit beast or twa in an honest way, or make a bonfire o' an enemy's haystack, but there's naethin' for't but Carlisle and a hempen cravat. But mind, callant, ye ha'e the bluid o' the Armstrongs in your veins, and their hands never earned bread by ony instrument but the sword, and it winna be the son o' Sandy o' Cleughfoot that will disgrace his kith and kin by trudging at a ploughtail, or learning some beggarly handicraft. Swear to me, Archy, that ye will live by the sword like your faithers afore ye

—swear to your faither, callant, an' fear neither Jamie Stuart, his twa kingdoms, nor his horsemen—they'll ha'e stout hearts that cross Tarras moss, and there will be few sheep in Liddesdale before the pot at Cleughfoot need nae skimming."

"I will live like my faither before me—king o' Tarrasside," said the youth.

"That shall ye, Archy," rejoined the freebooter; "an' though the Scotts an' the Elliots may, like fause louns, make obeisance to the king, and get braid lands for bending their knees, what cares Sandy Armstrong for their lands, their manrents, or their sheep-skins, scrawled owre by a silk-fingered monk—his twa-handed blade and his Jeddart-staff shall be a better title to an Armstrong than an acre o' parchment."

The boy caught the spirit of his sire, and flourished his Jedburgh-staff, or battle-axe, in his hand. The father raised the quegh to his lips—"Here's to ye, Archy," he cried, "ye'll be cooper o' Fogo!"

He crossed his arms upon his breast—he sat thoughtful for a few minutes, and again added—"Archy—but my heart fills to look on ye—ye are a brave bairn, but this is nae langer the brave man's country. Courage is persecuted, and knaves only are encouraged, that can scribble like the monks o' Melrose. Ye had sax brithers, Archy—sax lads whase marrows warna to be found on a' the lang Borders—wi' them at my back an' I could hae ridden north and south, an' made the name o' Sandy Armstrong be feared; but they are gane—they're a' gane, and there's nane left but you to protect and defend your poor mother when I am gane too; and now they would hunt me like a deer if they durst, for they are butchering guid and true men for our bit raid to Penrith, as though the life o' an Armstrong were o' less value than an English nowt. If ye live to be a man, Archy, and to see your poor auld mother's head

laid in the mould, take my sword and leave this poor, pitifu', king-ridden, an' book-ruined country; an' dinna ye disgrace your faither by makin' bickers like the coopers o' Nicolwood, or pinglin' wi' an elshin like the souters o' Selkirk."

The sleuth-dog, which lay at their feet, started up, snuffed the air, growled and lashed its tail. "Ha! Tiger! what is't, Tiger?" cried Sandy, addressing the dog, and springing to his feet.

"Troopers! troopers, faither!" cried Archy, "an' they are comin' frae ilka side o' the forest."

"Get ready the dags,* Archy," said the freebooter; "it's twa lang spears' length to the bottom o' Tarras moss, an they'll be light men and lighter horses that find na a grave in't—get ready the dags, and cauld lead shall welcome the first man that mentions King Jamie's name before the walls o' Cleughfoot."

The boy ran and brought his father's pistols—his mother accompanied him to the turret. She gazed earnestly on the threatening bands of horsemen as they approached, for a few seconds, then taking her husband's hand—"Sandy," said she, "I hae lang looked for this; but others that are wives the now shall gang widows to bed the night, as well as Elspeth Armstrong!"

"Fear naething, Elspeth, my doo," replied the riever; "there will be blood in the way if they attack the lion in his den. But there's a lang and tangled moss atween them an' Cleughfoot. We hae seen an enemy nearer an' be glad to turn back again."

"They will reach us, faither," cried Archy; "do ye no see they hae muffled men before them?"

"Muffled men! then, bairn, your faither's betrayed!" exclaimed the freebooter, "an' there's naething but revenge and death left for Sandy Armstrong!"

* Pistols.

He stalked rapidly around the turret—he examined his pistols, the edge of his sword, his Jedburgh-staff, and his spear. Elspeth placed a steel cap on his head, and, from beneath it, his dark hair, mingled with grey, fell upon his brow. He stood with his ponderous spear in one hand and a pistol in the other, and the declining sun cast his shadow across the moss, to the very horses' feet of his invaders. Still the horsemen, who amounted to several hundreds, drew nearer and nearer on every side, and impenetrable as the morass was to strangers, yet, by devious windings, as a hound tracks its prey, the muffled men led them on, till they had arrived within pistol shot of Cleughfoot.

"What want ye, friends?" shouted the outlaw—"think ye that a poor man like Sandy Armstrong can gi'e upputtin' and provender for five hundred horse?"

"We come," replied an officer, advancing in front of the company, "by the authority o' our gracious prince, James, king o' England and Scotland, and in the name o' his commissioner, Sir William Selby, to punish and hand over to justice Border thieves and outlaws, o' whom we are weel assured that you, Sandy Armstrong, o' the Cleughfoot, are habit and repute, amangst the chief."

"Ye lie! ye lie!" returned the outlaw; "ye dyvors in scarlet an' cockades, ye lie! I hae lived thir fifty years by my ain hand, an' the man was never born that dared say Sandy Armstrong laid finger on the widow's cow or the puir man's mare, or that he scrimpit the orphan's meal. But I hae been a protector o' the poor and helpless, an' a defender o' the cowan-hearted, for a sma' but honest black-mail, that other men, wi' no half the strength o' Sandy Armstrong, wadna ta'en up at their foot.

"Do ye surrender in peace, ye boastin' rebel?" replied the herald, "or shall we burn your den about your ears?"

"I ken it is death ony way ye take it," rejoined the outlaw—"ye would show me an' mine the mercy that

was shown to my kinsman, John o' Gilnokie,* and I shall surrender as an Armstrong surrenders—when the breath is out."

Fire flashed from a narrow crevice which resembled a cross in the turrets—the report of a pistol was heard, and the horse of the herald bounded, and fell beneath him.

"That wasna done like an Armstrong, Archy," said the freebooter; "ye hae shot the horse, an' it might hae been the rider—the man was but doing his duty, an' it was unfair and cowardly to fire on him till the affray began.

"I shall mind again, faither," said Archy, "but I thought, wi' sic odds against us, that every advantage was fair."

While these events transpired, Elspeth was busied placing powder and balls upon the roof of the turret; she brought up also a carabine, and putting it in her husband's hands, said—"Tak ye that, Sandy, to aim at their leaders, and gie Archy an' me the dags."

The horsemen encompassed the wall; Sandy, his wife, and his son, knelt upon the turret, keeping up, through the crevices, a hurried but deadly fire on the besiegers. It was evident the assailants intended to blow up the wall. The freebooter beheld the train laid, and the match applied. Already his last bullet was discharged. "Let us fire the straw among the cattle!" cried little Archy. "Weel thought, my bairn!" exclaimed the riever. The boy rushed down into the house, and in an instant returned with a flaming pine torch in his hand. He dropped it amongst the cattle. He dashed a handful of powder on the spot, and in a moment half of the court-yard burst into a flame. At the same instant a part of the court-wall trembled—exploded—fell. The horned cattle and the horses were rushing wildly to and fro through the fire. The invaders

* This subject forms another of the Border Tales.

burst through the gap. Elspeth tore a pearl drop from her ears,* and, thrusting it into the pistol, discharged it at the head of the first man who approached the house. It was evident they intended to blow up the house, as they had done the wall. Sandy had now no weapon that he could render effective but his spear, and he said—"They shall taste the prick of the hedgehog before I die." He thrust it down furiously upon them, and several of them fell at his threshold, but the deadly instrument was grasped by a number of the besiegers, and wrenched from his hands.

The sun had already set, darkness was gathering over the morass, and still the fire burned, and the cattle rushed amongst the armed men in the court-yard.

"Elspeth," said the freebooter, "it is not your life they seek, and they canna hae the heart to harm our bairn. Gie me my Jeddard-staff in my hand—an' fareweel to ye, Elspeth—fareweel!—an eternal fareweel! Archy, fareweel, my gallant bairn!—never disgrace yer faither!—but ye winna—ye winna—an' if I am murdered, mind ye revenge me, Archy! Now we maun unbar the door, and I maun cut my way through them or perish."

Thus spoke the Borderer, and with his battle-axe in his hand, he embraced his wife and his son, and wept. "Now, Archy," said he, "slip and open the door—saftly!—saftly!—an' let me rush out."

Archy silently drew back the massy bars; in a moment the iron door stood ajar, and Sandy Armstrong, battle-axe in hand, burst into the court-yard, and into the midst of his besiegers. There was not a man amongst them that had not heard of the "terrible Jeddart-staff o' Sandy Armstrong." He cleaved them down before him—his very voice augmented their confusion—they shrank back at his

* The wives and daughters of the Borderers, at this period, wore numerous trinkets—spoils, no doubt, presented them by their husbands and wooers.

approach; and while some fled from the infuriated cattle, others fled from the arm of the freebooter. In a few seconds he reached the gap in the court-wall—he rushed upon the moss;—darkness had begun, and a thick vapour was rising from the morass. "Follow me who dare!" shouted Sandy Armstrong.

Archy withdrew into a niche in the passage, as his father rushed out;—and as the besiegers speedily burst into the house, amongst them was one of the muffled men* bearing a torch in his hand. Revenge fired the young Borderer, and, with his Jedburgh-staff, he made a dash at the hand of the traitor. The torch fell upon the floor, and with it three of the fingers that grasped it. The besiegers were instantly enveloped in gloom, and Archy, escaping from the niche from whence he had struck the blow, said unto himself—"I've gien ye a mark to find out who you are, neighbour."

The besiegers took possession of Cleughfoot, and the chief men of the party remained in it during the night, while a portion of their followers occupied the court-yard, and others, with their horses, remained on the morass. Archy and his mother were turned from their dwelling, and placed under a guard upon the moss, where they remained throughout the night; and, in the morning, Cleughfoot was blown up before them. They were conveyed as prisoners to Sir William Selby, who had fixed his quarters near Langholm.

"Whom do ye bring me here?" inquired the new-made knight; "a wife and bairn!—Hae ye been catching sparrows and let the eagle escape?—Whar hae ye the head and the hand o' the outlaw?"

"Troth, Sir Knight," replied an officer, "and his head

* A muffled man was one who, for his future safety, assumed a mask or disguise in leading the enemy to the haunt of his neighbours or associates whom he betrayed.

is where it shouldna be—on his ain shouthers. At the darkenin' he escaped upon the moss; three troopers, guided by a muffler and a sleuth-dog, pursued him; an' as we crossed the bog this mornin', we found ane o' the troopers sunk to the middle in't, an' his horse below him; and far'er on were the dead bodies o' the other twa, the sleuth-dog, and the muffled man. I am sorry, therefore, to inform ye, Sir Knight, that Sandy Armstrong has escaped, but we hae made a bonefire o' his keep, an' brought ye his wife and his son—wha are Armstrongs, soul and body o' them—to do wi' them as ye may judge proper."

"Tuts, man," replied Sir William, "wad he hae us to disgrace our royal commission by hangin' an auld wife an a bairn? Gae awa, ye limmer, ye—gae awa wi' your brat," he added, addressing Elspeth, "an' learn to live like honest folk; or, if ye fa' in my way again, ye shall dance by the crook frae a woodie."

"Where can I gang?" said she sorrowfully, as she withdrew. "O Archy! we hae neither house nor hauld—friend nor kindred!—an' wha will shelter the wife and bairn o' poor persecuted Sandy Armstrong!"

"Dinna fret, mother," said Archy; "though they hae burned Cleughfoot, the stanes are still left, an' I can soon big a bit place to stop in; nor, while there's a hare in Tarras wood, or a sheep on the Leadhills, shall ye ever want, mother.

They returned in sorrow to the heap of ruins that had been their habitation; and Elspeth, in the bitterness of her spirit, sat down upon the stones and wept. But after she had wept long, and the sound of her lamentation had howled across the desert, she arose and assisted her son in constructing a hut from the ruins, in which they might lay their heads. In two days it was completed, but, on the third day, the disconsolate wife of the freebooter sank

on her bed of rushes, and the sickness of death was in her heart.

"Oh, speak to me, mother!" cried Archy; "what—what can I do for ye?"

"Naethin', my bairn!—naethin'!" groaned the dying woman—"the sun's fa'in dark on the een o' Elspeth Armstrong; but, oh, may the saunts o' heaven protect my poor Archy!"

She tried to repeat the only prayer she had ever learned—for religion was as little understood in the house of a freebooter as the eighth commandment. Poor Archy wrung his hands and sobbed aloud.

"Dinna die, mother—oh! dinna die!" he exclaimed, "or what will become o' your Archy!" He rushed from the hut, and with a broken vessel which he had found among the ruins, he brought water from the rivulet. He applied it to her lips—he bathed her brow—"O mother! mother, dinna die!" he cried again, "and I will get you bread too!" He again hurried from the hut, and bounded across the moss with the fleetness of a young deer. It was four long miles to the nearest habitation, and in it dwelt Ringan Scott, a dependent of the Buccleuchs. There had never been friendship between his family and that of Sandy Armstrong, but, in the agony of Archy's feelings, he stopped not to think of that nor of aught but his dying mother. He rushed into the house—"Gie me bread!" he exclaimed wildly, "for the love o' heaven gie me bread, for my mother is perishin'!"

"Let her perish!—an may ye a' perish!" said a young man, the son of Ringan, who stood by the fire with his right hand in a sling, "ye's get nae bread here."

"I maun!—I shall!" cried Archy, vehemently. Half of a coarse cake lay upon the table; he snatched it up, and rushed out of the house. They pursued him for a time, but affection and despair gave wings to his speed. Breath-

less, he reached the wretched hut, and, on entering, he cried—"Mother, here is bread! I have gotten't! I have gotten't!" But his mother answered him not. "Speak, mother! O mother, speak! here is bread now—eat it an' ye'll be better," he cried, but his mother was still silent. He took her hand in his—"Are ye sleepin', mother?" he added—"here is bread!" He shook her gently, but she stirred not. He placed his hand upon her face; it was cold as the rude walls of the hut, and her extended arms were stiff and motionless. He raised them, and they fell heavily and lifeless. "Mother!—mother!" screamed Archy; but his mother was dead! He rushed from the hut wildly, tearing his hair—he flung himself upon the ground—he called upon his father, and the glens of Tarras echoed the cry; but no father was near to answer. He flew back to the hut. He knelt by his mother's corpse—he rubbed her face and her bosom—he placed his lips to hers, and again he invoked her to speak. Night drew on, and, as darkness fell over the ghastly features of the corpse, he fled with terror from the hut, and wandered weeping throughout the night upon the moss. At sunrise he returned, and again sat down and wept by the dead body of his mother. He became familiar with death, and his terror died away. Two nights more passed on, and the boy sat in the desolate hut in the wilderness, watching and mourning over the lifeless body of his mother. On the fourth day, he took a fragment of the iron gate, and began to dig her grave. He raised the dead body in his arms, and weeping, screaming, as he went, he bore it to the tomb he had prepared for it. He gently placed it in the cold earth, and covered it with the moss and the green sod. All the day long he toiled in rolling and carrying stones from the ruins of his father's house, to erect a cairn over his mother's grave. When his task was done, he wrung his hands, and exclaimed, "Now, poor

Archy Armstrong hasna a friend in the wide world!" While he yet stood mourning over the new-made grave, a party of horsemen, who were still in quest of his father, rode up and accosted him. His tragic tale was soon told, and, in the bitterness of his heart, he accused them as being the murderers of his father and his mother. Amongst them was one of the chief men of the Elliot clan, who held lands in the neighbourhood. He felt compassion for Archy, and he admired his spirit; and, desiring him to follow him, he promised to provide for him. Archy reluctantly obeyed, and he was employed to watch the sheep of his protector on the hills.

Eighteen years passed away. Archy was now thirty years of age; he had learned to read, and even to write, like the monks that were in Melrose. He was the principal herdsman of his early benefactor, and was as much beloved as his father had been feared. But at times the spirit of the freebooter would burst forth; and he had not forgiven the persecutors, or, as he called them, the murderers of his parents. Amongst these was one called "Fingerless Dick," the son of Ringan Scott, of whom we have spoken. Archy had long known that he was one of the muffled men who had conducted Selby's horsemen to his father's house, and that he was the same from whose hand he had dashed the torch with his battle-axe. Now, there was to be a football fray in Liddesdale, and the Borderers thronged to it from many miles. Archy was there, and there also was his enemy—"Fingerless Dick." They quarrelled—they closed—both came to the ground, but Scott was undermost. He drew his knife—he stabbed his antagonist in the side—he was repeating the thrust, when Archy wrenched the weapon from his hand, and, in the fury of the moment, plunged it in his breast. At first the wound was believed to be mortal, and an attempt was made to seize Archy, but clutching an oaken cudgel from the hands of one who stood near him—

"Lay hands on me wha dare!" he cried, as he brandished it in the air, and fled at his utmost speed.

Archy knew that though his enemy might recover, the Scotts would let loose the tender mercies of the law upon his head, and instead of returning to the house of his master, he sought safety in concealment.

On the third day after the fray in Liddesdale, he entered Dumfries. He was weary and wayworn, for he had fled from hill to hill, and from glen to glen, fearing pursuit. He inquired for a lodging, and was shown to a small house near the foot of a street leading to the river, and which, we believe, is now called the Bank Vennel; and in which, he was told, "the pig folk and other travellers put up for the night." There was a motley group in the house, beggars and chapmen, and amongst the former was an old man of uncommon stature; and his hair, as white as snow, descended down upon his shoulders. His beard was of equal whiteness, and fell upon his breast. An old grey cloak covered his person, which was fastened round his body with a piece of rope instead of a girdle. He appeared as one who had been in foreign wars, and he wore a shade or patch over his left eye. He spoke but little, but he gazed often and wistfully on the countenance of Archy, and more than once a tear found its way down his weather-beaten cheeks. In the morning when Archy rose to depart, "Whither gang ye, young man?" inquired the old beggar, earnestly—"are ye for the north or for the south?"

"Wherefore spier ye, auld man?" replied Archy.

"I hae a cause, an' ane that winna harm ye," said the stranger, "if ye will thole an auld man's company for a little way."

Archy agreed that he should accompany him, and they took the road towards Annan together. It was a calm and glorious morning: the Solway flashed in the sunlight

like a silver lake, and not a cloud rested on the brow of the majestic Criffel. For the space of three miles they proceeded in silence, but the old man sighed oft and heavily, as though his spirit were troubled. "Let us rest here for a few minutes," said he, as he sat down on a green knoll by the way-side, and gazing steadfastly in Archy's face—"Young man," he added, "your face brings owre my heart the memories o' thirty years—and, oh! persecuted as the name is—answer me truly if your name be Armstrong?"

"It is!" replied Archy, "and perish the son o' Sandy Armstrong when he disowns it!"

"An' your faither—your mother," continued the old man, hesitating as he spoke—"do they—does she live?"

In a few words Archy told of his father's persecution—of his being hunted from the country like a wild beast—of the destruction of the home of his childhood—of his mother's death, and of her burial by his own hands in the wilderness.

"Oh! my poor Elspeth!" cried the aged beggar, "Archy! my son! my son! I am your faither! Sandy Armstrong, the outlaw!"

"My faither!" exclaimed Archy, pressing the beggar to his breast. When they had wept together,—"Let us gae nae farer south," said the old man, "but let us return to Tarras moss, that when the hand o' death comes, ye may lay me down in peace by the side of my Elspeth.

With a sorrowful heart Archy told his father that he was flying from the law and the vengeance of the Scotts. "Gie them gowd as a peace-offering," said the old man, and he pulled from beneath his coarse cloak a leathern purse, filled with gold, and placed it in the hands of his son. For nearly twenty years Sandy had served in foreign wars, and obtained honours and rewards; and on visiting his native land, he had assumed the beggar's garb for safety.

They returned to Tarras-side together, and a few yellow coins quashed the prosecution of "Fingerless Dick." Archy married the daughter of his former employer, and became a sheep-farmer; and, at the age of fourscore years and ten, the old freebooter closed his eyes in peace in the house of his son, and in the midst of his grandchildren, and was buried, according to his own request, by the side of Elspeth in the wilderness.

THE DOUBLE-BEDDED ROOM.

"Say you love
His person—be not asham'd of't; he's a man,
For whose embraces, though Endymion
Lay sleeping by, Cynthia would leave her orb,
And exchange kisses with him."

Massinger.

"THE morn was fair, the sky was clear," when Mr. Andrew Micklewhame set his foot aboard one of the "Stirling, Alloa, and Kincardine Steam Company's" boats, at the Chain Pier, Newhaven, for the purpose of proceeding to the first-named place, on a visit to his old friend, Davie Kerr, who had been, for upwards of twenty years, a respectable ironmonger in that romantic town. On reaching Alloa, however, where, as every one knows, the steamers pause for such length of time as enables them to take in a supply of coals, and the tide to run up, it began to rain, in the manner best expressed by the household phrase, "auld wives and pipe stapples." Notwithstanding this, Andrew being determined to make the most of his time—for a week was the utmost limit of his leave of absence from the Edinburgh cloth establishment, in which he was in the habit of wearing away his days and his coat sleeves—ascended from the cabin where he had been luxuriating over the only volume—the first of "Wilson's Tales of the Borders"—of which its library could boast; and unfurling his umbrella, walked ashore in the fond hope of seeing or hearing something worth the seeing or hearing. And Andrew was not disappointed; for, to his unspeakable delight, he descried against the gable-end of a white house, a play-bill, on which "Venice Preserved," appeared in

letters of half-an-inch deep; the part of Pierre, by Mr. Ferdinand Gustavus Trash, and Jaffier, by Mr. Henry Watkins. The afterpiece, "Rob Roy." Being extremely partial to theatrical amusements, of whatever description, and, moreover, being a contributor to a dramatic review, published weekly in the Scottish metropolis, it occurred to Mr. Andrew Micklewhame that here he might, in all probability, find materials sufficient on which to establish a funny critique, that would print to the extent of at least six of the twelve pages of the aforesaid dramatic review, and yield him good pay. Such an opportunity was not to be lost. He, therefore, resolved on remaining at Alloa that night to witness the performances, and proceeding to Stirling next morning by the earliest conveyance.

Having arranged this to his own content, he stalked majestically into an inn—without stopping to notice the sign which projected angularly over the door, bearing the representation of a ship in full sail, among emerald waves, with moon-rakers and sky-scrapers ingeniously mixed up with the indigo clouds above—and stoutly called for a pint of porter and a biscuit, to take the edge off his appetite. This inn rejoiced not in a landlord; he that *was* the landlord had, some twelve years before, taken himself off to "that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns;" and his widow had not been lucky enough to meet with another ready and willing to let himself become entangled with her in the meshes of matrimony. The waiters who had, in her husband's time, been wont to serve the customers, had either died out, or gone to other and better situations, and left her with one solitary maid of all work—the same who had officiated as barmaid to the inn for fifteen years.

This maid of all work—Kirsty by name—was a tall, hard-featured woman, of—by her own acknowledgment—two-and-forty; not very tidy in her adornment, nor very

bewitching in her manner. She it was who brought Mr. Andrew Micklewhame the pint of porter and the biscuit.

"I suppose, my dear!" said Andrew—(he had been a gay deceiver in his youth, and, ever since that period, the phrase, "my dear!" had stuck to him, and always when speaking to a female did he use it)—"I suppose, my dear," continued he, "I can have tea, and a beef-steak, or something of that kind, to it, in"—(here he stopped, and looked at his watch, from which he ascertained that it was then half-past four o'clock)—"in an hour and a half; and, as I purpose staying here to-night, I should like a bed. Will you arrange this for me?"

"Ye can easily get yer tea, sir," said the woman of forty-two, looking pleased at being addressed, "my dear;" "but, as for the bed, unless ye like to sleep in a dooble-bedded room, we canna gie ye accomodation. The lad that sleeps in ane o' the beds, is a decent sort o' a callant. We dinna ken much aboot him though; for he only comes here at nicht for his bed; and in the mornings, after his breakfast, awa' he gangs, and we never sees his face till nicht again; except upon the Sundays, when he aye has a pairty o' braw leddies an' gentlemen to dinner wi' him. He has leeved that way for a fortnicht or three weeks; an' my mistress hasna been the woman to ask him for a penny. Fegs! I'm thinkin' she has taen a notion o' the callant. What he is or what he diz we dinna ken, an' naebody can tell us."

"Mysterious being!" inwardly ejaculated (as the novelists' phrase goes) Mr. Micklewhame; then turning to Kirsty, with an inquiring look, he said—"Is he genteel in appearance? of good address? of pleasing manner? Is he"——

"Ou, ay!" was the reply; "he's a' that—I never see'd a genteeler young man in a' my days; and sae handsome too; sic black whiskers, an' sae broad aboot the shouthers. My certie, he's a stalworth chiel. An', as for his address; heth,

man, he often gies me a kiss in the mornings as he gangs oot, and promises me anither whan he comes back again. Ye needna be the least feared to sleep in the same room wi' him."

"Feared!" muttered Micklewhame. "Afraid of a man with black whiskers and broad shoulders! I flatter myself I never was afraid in my life." So saying, he elevated himself on his pins to the same degree as he rose at that moment in his own estimation. Then turning to the table whereon he had deposited his hat, he seized it up, and, with a dexterous jerk, stuck it on his head, at the same time exclaiming—"You may prepare the bed for me—I'll sleep in the room with this mysterious man; and, while the tea is getting ready, I'll just take a short stroll."

With these words he left the inn.

Mr. Andrew Micklewhame was a middle-aged man, with a rotundity of corpus, and a bachelor to boot. In his youthful days his love for the fair sex had partaken more of a general than a particular character; and now that he had arrived at the meridian of life, his taste had grown too particular for him to choose a partner for the remainder of his days from among those unmarried ladies whom he ranked among his acquaintances. "Girls," he would say, "are not now half so pretty, nor half so domestic, as they were in my young days." Then he would enter into a long tirade against the march of intellect, usually ending with a few observations upon pianoforte playing, and cooking a beef-steak, the latter accomplishment being in his opinion —as it is in that of every well-thinking person—the greater accomplishment of the two. One lady was too young; another was too old; a third was too tall; a fourth was too small; a fifth had no money; a sixth *had* money, but was downright ugly; a seventh was ill-tempered: in short, with every one on whom his matrimonial ideas had condescended to settle, he had some fault to find.

There is no pleasing one who is predetermined not to be pleased.

Once, indeed, at a party to which he had been accidentally invited, he had felt a kind of a sort of a nervous tremulousness come over him on being set down at the supper table beside a lady, who, he discovered, was a widow; not from her garb, however; for widows—that is, young widows free of encumbrance—usually dress themselves in a much gayer manner than they were wont to do when "nice young maidens." He had made himself as agreeable as it was in his power to do, drinking wine with her at least half-a-dozen times, and otherwise doing, as he supposed, "the polite." Nay, he even went so far as to volunteer his services in seeing her home; and on the way over (she was from the country, and, *pro tempore*, resided with a friend in Bruntisfield Place, fronting the Links), he had the boldness to pop the question. He was accepted, and invited to breakfast with the lady the following morning. The morning came; but Andrew did not go—the fumes of the wine having subsided, and "Richard being himself again." He had taken a second thought on the subject, and determined on remaining a bachelor; by which arrangement the Widow Brown was, like Lord Ullin for his daughter, "left lamenting." Who her husband had been? whether she had money? what was her situation in life? were what Andrew tried long and earnestly to discover, but in vain—the Widow Brown seemed wrapped in mystery; and, from that hour, when he imprinted a kiss upon her lips, under a lamp-post, at two o'clock in the morning, in Bruntisfield Place, he had neither seen nor heard of her. Years—six in number—had elapsed since then, and Andrew had not ventured to accept another invitation to an evening party; but, as soon as his business for the day was over, he returned to his solitary lodging in Richmond Street; and, for the remainder of the evening, followed the example of the

gentlemen of England, and "lived at home at ease," never stirring out, except to pay an occasional visit to the theatre.

The localities of Alloa were quite unknown to Andrew, for the best reason in the world—he had never been in it before; but, by dint of attending to the usual expedient resorted to on like occasions—that of following his nose—in the space of a few minutes he discovered that his feet, or fate, had led him into a dockyard, where a vessel was just upon the point of being wedded to the ocean. Some women and men—the former, as usual, predominant—were seated on logs beneath a shed; others, the more impatient seemingly, were walking about with umbrellas and parasols above their heads—young men with young misses—old men and babes. Children in their first childhood, of various shapes and sizes, chiefly barefooted, were scampering among the wet sawdust, round about the logs of wood, in the shed and out of it, quite absorbed in the spirit-stirring game of "tig"—ever and anon yelping out each other's names, and otherwise expressing their joy at not being "it." Among their seniors there was a great deal of gabble to very little purpose, with a preponderate share of bustle and agitation.

Carpenters were thumping away at the blocks on which the vessel rested, making more noise than progress. At length the blocks were fairly driven out, and away boomed the vessel into the Forth, amid the cheers of the assembled spectators. The general interest then subsided; and in a few minutes thereafter, with exception of the carpenters and some stray children, the dockyard presented the picture of emptiness. The din had ended; and the multitude, reversing the condition of Rob Roy, had left desolation where they had found plenty.

Tea over, Mr. Andrew Micklewhame, having first seen to his accommodation for the night, and secured a place in the Stirling omnibus, which was advertised to start the next morning precisely at nine, wended his way quietly

to the theatre. It was in the Assembly Room—a rumbling old mansion, on the windows of which "time's effacing fingers" had taken *pains* to leave their mark so effectually, that sundry detachments of old soot-bedizzened "clouts" filled up those interstices where glass had once been. "The nonpareil company of comedians" entertained their audiences and held their orgies on the second floor—the first being occupied as an academy, where "young gentlemen are taken in and done for." The scenes in which the establishment rejoiced were five in number. Luckily, "Venice Preserved" did not require so many; but in "Rob Roy" the manager was compelled to make them perform double duty; and, consequently, the same scene was thrust on for the inside of a village inn apartment in Bailie Nicol Jarvie's, and the interior of Jean M'Alpine's change-house. The audience department was most gorgeous; there were boxes, pit, and gallery; or, in other words, front, middle, and back seats—the term "boxes" being applied to the front form, to which there was a back attached, most aristocratically garnished with green cloth, with brass nails in relief. At the farther end of this form "an efficient orchestra" was placed. It consisted of a boy to play the panpipes and the triangles at one and the same moment, a lad to thump away at the bass drum, and a blind man to perform on the clarionet—the last being dignified in the bills by the title of "leader of the orchestra, and conductor of music." The whole under the immediate superintendence of Mr. Ferdinand Gustavus Trash.

After an immensity of preliminary puffs into the clarionet, occasional rattles on the drum, and consultations among themselves as to the air to be played, the musicians struck up the spirit-stirring "All Round my Hat;" which, though achieved in beautiful disregard of time and concord, was received with great—ay, with very great applause, by the momentarily increasing audience, some of whom mistook it

for "God Save the King," and, in an extreme fit of loyalty, bawled out—"Off hats! stand up!" with which command many did not hesitate to comply.

There was a pause, interrupted at length by the loudly expressed wish of the gods that the curtain should draw up. Up it went accordingly, and "Venice Preserved" commenced with some show of enthusiasm. Belvidera was personated by an interesting female of five-and-thirty, who, after parting in tears from Jaffier, a youth of eighteen, as the means of acquainting the audience with her extraordinary vocal abilities, consoled herself and them with that very appropriate ditty—"Within a Mile of Edinburgh Town," accompanied by the orchestra. The Doge of Venice, not to be outdone, as it were, left his throne after the terrific disclosures of Jaffier, and, in honest exultation at the discovery of the horrid plot, solaced the mysterious Council of Ten with—"I was the boy for bewitching them." The bass drum was particularly distinguished in the accompaniment.

In a critique of the performances which Mr. Micklewhame wrote, he says—"It would have greatly added to the delight of those conversant with the pure English idiom, had many of the actors paid a visit, for a short time, to the *first* floor of the Assembly Room, ere venturing to appear on the second."

The meagreness of the company compelled several of the principal performers to play inferior parts, in addition to those against which their names appeared in the bill. For instance, in "Rob Roy," the same person who performed Rashleigh had to "go on" in the capacity of a peasant, and sing a bass solo in the opening glee. Owen and Major Galbraith were *done* by the same individual. Mattie sung in the opening glee, and danced the Highland Fling at the Pass of Lochard, with Dougal and Bailie Nicol Jarvie. Some of the audience were scandalized at the appearance

of Mattie on this occasion, and began to entertain gre doubts of the morality of the bailie, when they saw handmaid in his company so far from the Trongate.

Seated on *the* front form, with green cloth back studded with brass nails, and immediately behind a row of six penny dipped candles, tastefully arranged in order among an equivalent number of holes in a stick placed in front of the drop-scene to divide the audience from the actors, Andrew Micklewhame gazed on all this with the stoical indifference of one who is used to such things: in short, he gazed on it with the eye of an experienced critic—the best of all possible ways to mar one's enjoyment of a play. Occasionally, however, he felt inclined to indulge in a hearty laugh; but the dignity of the critic came to his aid, and he restrained it by turning away his face from the stage and casting his scrutinizing glance around the inhabitants of the seats in the rear, or listened to the remarks of those in the pit. It was during the latter part of the performance of the first act, and the interval between it and the second, that he, in this manner, overheard the fragments of a conversation carried on, *sotto voce*, in the seat immediately behind him. He had the curiosity to steal a glance at the speakers. They were a young woman, with fine dark eyes, and a young man, of apparently five-and-twenty years of age, with cheeks *red*olent of rouge, enveloped in a faded Petersham greatcoat, whom Andrew immediately set down as belonging to the company of comedians. He could hear the young woman with the dark eyes upbraiding the young man with the coloured cheeks for deserting her; then the young man said he had intended to write her soon, with some money, so she ought not to have followed him.

"I am pretty well situated in lodgings here at present," continued the young man; "but I cannot venture to take you there to-night, for the fact of my being a married

man would not, were it known, raise me in the estimation of the landlady. But I will procure other lodgings for you after the play is over; and if you do not hear from me in the morning, at farthest by ten, you may call for me at the inn where I am staying." He ended by observing that he was wanted in the next act to go on as a Highlander; and, accordingly, he left her, and crept in behind the curtain.

There was nothing very extraordinary in all this; yet, though Andrew knew that such occurrences happened daily, he could not help thinking of what he had just overheard, and feeling interested in the damsel of the sparkling eyes. He did not dare, however, to take another peep at her, as he thought it would be too marked; and when he rose, at the termination of the performances, to go away, the seat behind him was quite vacant; nor could he discern, among the dense mass of human beings that obstructed the door-way, the slightest vestige of her, or the youth in the shabby greatcoat who had acknowledged himself her husband.

The rain had not ceased when Mr. Micklewhame left the Assembly Room, so he hurried to his inn with all possible despatch. Mr. Micklewhame prided himself on his knowledge of the principles of economy; and when he travelled he invariably made it a point to take no more than two meals per diem—breakfast and tea—both with a meat accompaniment; but this evening—this particular evening—as he sat toasting his toes before an excellent fire, in a comfortable parlour of a comfortable inn, and heard the rain pattering against the casement, it, somehow or other, entered into his head that a tumbler of punch would be by no means amiss. A tumbler of punch was ordered in accordingly; after that came a second; and a third; and—no, we can't exactly say that there was a fourth. At all events, there was a marked inclination, first towards one

side of the staircase, and then towards the other, in Mr. Andrew Micklewhame's ascent to his bedroom that evening. Nay, more; he attempted to kiss Kirsty as she was depositing the candlestick upon the table; but he missed his aim, and measured his length on the floor. By the time he was up again, Kirsty had vanished.

Mr. Micklewhame was a little annoyed that he could not use the precaution of bolting his door. The mysterious man, with the black whiskers and broad shoulders, had not yet claimed his bed, although it was pretty well on towards

"The wee short hour ayont the twal."

"I don't half like this sleeping in a double-bedded room, with a man I never saw," he thought, but did not venture to say it aloud, lest some one might be within ear-shot, and set him down as a coward. "I wonder," exclaimed he, as he proceeded to undress before the yet glowing embers of a consumptive fire, "whether—hic—whether the f—f—fellow snores. I sha'n't sleep, I'm sure—hic—I sha'n't—hic—sleep, if the f—f—fellow snores."

Having delivered himself of this very sensible observation, he got into one of the beds in the best way he could, covered himself up warm, and fell fast asleep.

Dreams visited his pillow; distorted visions, in which Kirsty, the dark-eyed damoiselle, and the man with the black whiskers, bore prominent parts, flitted across his fancy. Then he felt himself borne through the air by a vulture in a shabby brown greatcoat, which set him down on the top of a high house, and flew away. He thought he got up and groped his way along the house-top; but, missing his footing, he fell over, and would certainly have had his brains dashed out upon the pavement below, had not the motion of his descent caused him to start and awaken. All was still within the chamber. He looked out

of bed, but could discover no signs of the appearance of his mysterious neighbour; so he composed himself to sleep again. This time, however, he was not so successful as at first; for it was only after some time that he could coax himself into a sort of doze—something betwixt sleeping and waking. While in this state, he fancied he saw the man in the brown greatcoat enter the room; then he saw a flash of light; then he imagined he smelt sulphur; and then, all of a sudden, he felt himself in reality pulled half out of bed.

"Hollo, hollo!" cried he; "what the deuce is the matter?" and he rubbed his eyes until he found himself wide awake.

"Sir, sir!" cried a voice, "you've made a mistake—you've got into my bed in place of your own."

Any one in Andrew's place but Andrew himself would have cursed and sworn like a trooper at a person daring to awaken him from a comfortable snooze upon such slight pretences; but Andrew was a peaceable man—he never liked to make any disturbance—and he actually, without saying a word, turned out of the bed he had warmed for himself, and allowed the stranger to get into his place. He was sure, at all events, that he had not given up his bed to any but the lawful tenant of the room; for a blink of firelight gleamed upon a pair of extensive whiskers, with shoulders to correspond. The features struck Andrew as being familiar to him; but he could not, though he tried, for the life of him, recollect where he had before seen them. He cursed the fellow's impudence, as he discovered that the smell of sulphur which had saluted his olfactory nerves, was *not* the smell of sulphur, but of a candle having been blown out. He did not dare, though, to utter a word on the subject. He felt very much afraid—indeed, so much so, that it was not till after an hour's perambulation through the room, that he could prevail

on himself to lie down in the empty bed. Again he fell fast asleep.

When he awoke, the morning light was streaming into the room through the chinks of the shutters. He wondered very much what o'clock it was, as he remembered that he purposed setting off by the omnibus at nine, and groped about for his watch. Horror!—he had left it beneath the pillow of the other bed.

Jumping to the floor with considerable agility, and opening the shutters with a bang, in the hope that noise and daylight would bring him courage, the first objects that met his astonished gaze, were a shabby brown greatcoat and a shocking bad hat, lying carelessly on a chair. Had any one asked Andrew to shave his head without soap, or give sixpence for a penny loaf, he could not have been more amazed or terror-stricken than he was at that moment. That the shabby brown greatcoat and the shocking bad hat belonged to the mysterious man with the black whiskers, and that the mysterious man with the black whiskers, and he who had sat beside the damsel with the bright eyes at the play, were one and the same individual, Mr. Andrew Micklewhame had not the smallest doubt, and thereupon he began to get a little fidgetty regarding his watch. The curtains of the bed were closely drawn—so closely that Andrew could not see in; and he did not just like at first to open the curtains and disturb the whiskered youth in the same manner as the whiskered youth had disturbed him. No. Andrew was a more generous-minded man than that.

He paced the room for some time, fancying all sorts of things about the owner of the shabby brown greatcoat, but never taking his eye off the curtains, resolved to rush forward on the first appearance of their opening.

"'Tis for no good this fellow lives here," thought Andrew. "All a sham, too, his being connected with

these players. I have no doubt in my own mind that he is either the murderer of Begbie in disguise, or a resurrectionist. Ah! perhaps he has run away from the world, and come here for the purpose of committing suicide in a quiet way. But, no; why should he? That's quite improbable." And, after thinking all this, he paused for about five minutes, then exclaimed, not aloud, however—"I can bear this suspense no longer. Eeod! I'll ask the fellow who he is, and, at the same time, claim my watch!"

So saying, he rushed forward with a determined air, drew the curtains, and discovered—the bed was empty!

"He can't have gone far, for he has left his coat and hat behind him," were Andrew's reflections; and as he said this, he looked for his watch, and then for his clothes. Amazement! they were all gone; watch, shirt, coat, vest, and inexpressibles—all had vanished. In a paroxysm of fury he rang the bell; and, presently, the voice of Kirsty, from without, inquired, as she half-opened the door, and thrust forward a pair of well worn Wellingtons, which Andrew recognised as not belonging to him—"D'ye please to want onything else?"

"Anything else!" roared Andrew, choking with rage, and utterly regardless of the respect due to the sex of the speaker. "Come in here, and help me to find my trowsers!"

"O you—ye'll wait awhile, I'm thinkin, or I do siccan a thing."

"Zounds! that infernal fellow must have carried them off!" muttered Andrew.

"Na, na," said Kirsty; "it's no the infernal gentleman ava, man. I wadna be the least surprised but it's that auld punchy buddy that sleepit in this room last nicht, and ran awa this morning, wi' the nine o'clock omnibush, without payin his reckonin, that's ta'en yer breeks; but ye needna mind, ye can just pit on *his* for a day."

This was too much. To be told that he himself was the thief of his own o-no-we-never-mention-ems, and that he had run away that morning without paying his reckoning, was more than Andrew Micklewhame could bear.

"Are you mad, woman?" cried he. "Confound you, I'll leave your house instantly, and bring an action for the recovery of my clothes."

"Your claes, quotha—your claes. My man, thae tricks winna do here, I can tell ye. Ye're fund oot at last. My certie, to hear a fallow speakin o' claes, whan it's weel kenned he had nae mair than a brown greatcoat, an auld hat, an' a pair o' boots I wadna gie tippence for. Ye're fund oot at last. There's twa chaps below has twa or three words to say to ye."

"They may go to the devil, and you along with them!" was Andrew's pert rejoinder.

"Bide a bit—just bide a bit. Hy," cried Kirsty, seemingly over the banisters of the stair, to some unknown individual or individuals below. "Stap up this way, will ye?"

And fast upon the heels of this summons, in walked two justice of peace officers, who, despite the asseverations of Mr. Andrew Micklewhame that he was himself and no other, ordered him to don the brown greatcoat, and the shocking bad hat, and follow them.

"We've pursued you from Queensferry," said the first—"round by Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Stirling; and Grog the innkeeper is determined to punish you, unless you pay him for the eight weeks' board you had in his house, and our expenses over and above."

It was in vain that Mr. Micklewhame protested he had never been in Queensferry in his life; nor had he the honour of the acquaintance of Grog, the innkeeper; but, at length, seeing that it was impossible to convince the officers to the contrary, he thought it advisable to pay the

amount of their demand, and trust to law and justice afterwards for retribution. Even with this he found himself unable to comply—his purse, containing every rap he owned in the world, was in the pockets of his inexpressibles.

There was no help for it. With despair in his countenance, he donned the shabby brown greatcoat and the dilapidated Wellingtons, took the shocking bad hat in his hand, and, in silence, followed the officers of justice down stairs, determining to appeal to the generosity of the landlady, who, he had no doubt, would give full credence to his story.

The present mishap of Mr. Micklewhame had arisen solely from the fact of his having taken so much toddy overnight, which was the cause of his sleeping longer and more soundly in the morning than usual. Kirsty, ever vigilant, had gone to the door of the double-bedded room and knocked, at the same time calling out, with a stentorian voice, that "the omnibush was ready to start." All this was unheeded by Andrew, who slept on, utterly unconscious of the progress of time. Not so, however, was it with the other occupant of the chamber; for no sooner did he hear Kirsty's summons, than a lucky thought occurred to him; and he bawled through the door, in tones "not loud but deep," that he would be down instantly. He then proceeded, in the coolest manner possible, to adorn himself in the habiliments of his somniferous neighbour; which, he soon perceived, were a "world too wide" for him—a fault which he instantly remedied by the assistance of a pillow, disposed of after the manner he had seen greater actors than himself "make themselves up" for the character of Falstaff. Thus equipped, he removed Andrew's watch from beneath the pillow, and placed it in the same pocket it had occupied the preceding day; took off his portable bushy whiskers, and put them in his pocket; then bidding adieu to his brown greatcoat and nap-

less hat, which, with the accompaniment of a pair of well-worn Wellington boots, had been his only attire for many a day, he strode from the apartment, carefully shutting the door behind him. As he got to the foot of the stairs, there was Kirsty in the outer passage. For a moment he felt undetermined what course next to pursue; but his never-failing wit came to his aid, and, stepping into a side room, the window of which looked out into the street, he desired Kirsty to bring him his bill of fare—*i. e.*, the bill of fare peculiar to Mr. Andrew Micklewhame—and a sheet of writing-paper, with pens and ink. Those being brought, and Kirsty having shut the door, leaving him "all alone in his glory," he scribbled a few lines on the paper, and made it up in the form of a letter. This was no sooner done, than the "impatient bugle"—*vulgo vocato*, tin horn—of the ominous cad, who stood on the opposite side of the street, just behind the omnibus, holding open the door with his left hand, blew a blast so loud and shrill, that all those in waiting in the street, who had serious intentions of proceeding to Stirling by that conveyance, seemed, of one accord, to know that it was their last warning; so, shaking hands with the friends who had come "to see them off," they scrambled nimbly up the steps of the omnibus, and passed from before the view of the bystanders into its ponderous interior. Our actor saw this, and, without more ado, he opened the window and jumped into the street. His letter he deposited in the post-office receiving-box, and his body in the omnibus, which, being now full, the cad banged to the door, gave the signal to the driver, and off the omnibus rattled; nor did Kirsty or her mistress know of the escapement of their guest, whom they both believed to be Andrew Micklewhame, until he was a considerable part on his way to Stirling.

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Kirsty was in the bar, stamping the post-mark on some

letters—for her mistress was post*master*—and talking to a young woman with bright eyes.

"The villain that he is!" said Kirsty. "A married man! Wha wad hae thocht it? an' a playactor too, crinkypatie! He'll be doon the noo, and ye'll see him then. There's twa gentlemen gaen up to him a wee while ago."

At this moment the landlady opened the door of a parlour off the bar, and handed to Kirsty some letters, which she had been ostensibly arranging for delivery—in reality, making herself acquainted with their contents.

"Here's six for delivery, and one to lie till called for!" Kirsty took them; and as her mistress shut the door, read aloud from the back of the letter—"'To lie till called for.' The name, 'Mrs. Isabella Young!'"

"What!" exclaimed the dark-eyed young woman starting, "a letter for me?" and she almost snatched it out of Kirsty's hand. A gleam of joy played upon her handsome face as she read—

"Dear Isy,—I enclose you a crown; if you want more, apply to Manager Trash for my arrears of salary. I'm off to Perth with the toggery of an old fellow who slept in the same room with me last night. They'll perhaps talk of pursuing me; if so, detain them as long as possible, and follow, at your leisure,

"Your affectionate

"Patrick Young."

At this juncture appeared Andrew in the custody of the two officers; and the damsel of the dark eyes, taking her cue from the document she had just perused, rushed forward and threw herself into his arms, exclaiming, "My own, my lost one!—Oh, do not—do not drag my husband from me!" The latter part of her sentence was addressed to the officers of justice.

"Loshifycairyme!" cried Kirsty; "he's lost his bonny black whiskers, and turned fatter nor he was!" Then, after a moment's reflection, she added—"But thae player buddies can do onything!"

"My pretty one," said Andrew, "I know nothing of you!" Yet the young woman still clung to her embrace. "You vile woman," he continued, waxing wroth, "get you gone. I'll tell your husband if you don't!" But Mrs. Young clung close and closer to him. He then addressed himself to Kirsty, desiring her to inform her mistress that he wished to say a few words to her. "Tell her," he continued, "that I am in great tribulation here, and I wish her to advance a small sum of money to these gentlemen, which will be returned with grateful thanks as soon as I get to Edinburgh."

Kirsty grumbled a little at being sent on such an errand; but proceeded into the little parlour off the bar. In a few seconds she returned, saying—"My mistress 'll no advance money to ony man unless to her lawfu' husband; and she says gif ye like to marry her, she'll do't, but no unless. I'm sure I dinna ken what she means, seeing ye're a married man already!"

"What!" exclaimed Andrew, "marry a woman I never saw?"

"On nae ither condition will she advance the money. Between oorsels, my mistress is worth at least twa thousand."

"Two thousand pounds!" thought Andrew. "The speculation wouldn't be such a bad one after all." And, after a show of hesitation, he gave a reluctant consent, as the only way, and a speedy one, to relieve him from his difficulties. His private debts amounted to at least a hundred pounds; and with two thousand pounds he could pay that; ay, and live like a prince besides.

The whole party was ushered into the little back parlour,

where, to complete Andrew's amazement, he descried, seated over a cup of coffee, the identical Widow Brown to whom he had given the slip six years before. She rose and shook him by the hand.

"Be not amazed!" she said. "The moment I saw you, from the window of this room, enter my inn yesterday, I recognised you, and my love for you returned. I know all." She certainly did, for she had read Patrick Young's letter to his wife. "I shall procure your immediate release; and should you rue the consent you have just given, you are free to return to Edinburgh as you came—a single man!"

"Generous woman!" cried Andrew, sinking on one knee, "this—this is too much! Think ye I could again desert you? No, by heaven!"—Here he laid his hand upon his breast, and turned up the white of his eyes in an attempt to look pathetic. The widow raised him and led him to a seat. The officers were dismissed; and the damsel with the dark eyes escaped through the open door as they went out, fearful of being detained for her deceitful attempt upon the person of Andrew Micklewhame.

In a few days the nuptials were solemnized; and Andrew Micklewhame ever blessed the lucky chance that led him to Alloa.

History is silent regarding the ultimate fate of Mr. Patrick Young; but it is to be hoped that he was either hanged or sent to Botany Bay. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Micklewhame thought it worth their while to pursue him for the injuries he had done them; and Grog, the innkeeper, could not, for his myrmidons had lost the scent of the stroller from the moment he fled from Alloa.

THE HIGHLAND BOY.

STRANGE, sometimes, are the destinies of men, and mysterious the ways of Providence. In these expressions there is nothing new, for they have been repeated a thousand times before; but we are not sure that they have often been more strikingly illustrated than in the following short narrative—alas! "owre true a tale." Within a short distance of the town of Inverary, in Argyleshire, there lived, towards the middle of last century, a person of the name of M'Lauchlane. He was a miller to business; but, if any idea be formed of his circumstances as such, or of the general condition and appearance of his establishment, from those of the "jolly millers" of the low country, with their large, well-built, slated mills, filled with expensive machinery—their comfortable houses, and rough and round abundance—it will be a very erroneous one. The highland miller—he, at any rate, of the last century—was a very different person, and very differently circumstanced. His business was trifling, as it must, of necessity, have been, in a country yielding but little corn—just sufficient, and barely so, to support, with other aids, its thin and widely scattered population. His mill was a small, thatched, crazy building; and its machinery (almost all of wood), the clumsy, rude workmanship of the miller himself. Such, at any rate, was M'Lauchlane's establishment—a very poor affair; and very poor, though very industrious, and an honest and upright man, was M'Lauchlane himself. Yet, strange as it may seem in a person in his situation in life, he was not only an upright man, but a man of some education, of a grave and intelligent cast of countenance, and of a tall and athletic form.

For fifteen years, M'Lauchlane toiled on his little farm with unwearied assiduity, struggling with a barren soil, that scarcely yielded a subsistence for his family, leaving no surplus for sale, the rent being paid by a few black cattle reared for the purpose; and more than half of that time dividing this labour with attendance on his little mill; and other fifteen years, had he lived so long, would, in all probability, have found him still thus employed, had not a circumstance occurred which suddenly changed his destiny. He quarrelled with his landlord, and resolved suddenly, in a fit of exasperation, upon leaving his mill. He never gave any further particulars of the occurrence which had galled his proud spirit. He never said what was the cause of quarrel between him and his laird; but the fancied disgrace of some harsh word which the latter had used towards him, preyed on his mind, and, in less than a fortnight after, he resigned his mill and his farm, and proceeded to the low country in search of employment. This he found in Edinburgh, where he had some friends, in the humble capacity of a caddie, or chairman.

On leaving the place of his residence in the Highlands, M'Lauchlane left behind him, until he should fall into some way of earning a subsistence, his wife, a son, and two daughters. The son was, at this period, about fifteen years of age; a fine, manly-looking boy, of kind and amiable dispositions, the pride of his mother's heart, and the stay of his father's hopes. It was not doubted that, on the latter obtaining employment, he would succeed in procuring some situation or other in Edinburgh for his son also; and, with these, and sundry other little plans and prospects, the family of M'Lauchlane, including himself, looked forward to the enjoyment of some happy days. Having obtained employment himself, M'Lauchlane lost no time in looking out for an engagement for his son; and, at length, found an opening for him in a merchant's count-

ing-house in Leith. This good fortune he speedily communicated to his family, desiring that James should immediately set out for Edinburgh. James, however, had been already unexpectedly provided for, although not altogether to his liking. He had been engaged to assist some salmon-curers who had an establishment in the neighbourhood; and with these he was now employed. The wages, however, were small, and the work heavy; but it was considered by the dutiful boy himself a desirable situation, as it enabled him to reside with his mother, whom he tenderly loved, and to contribute more promptly and efficiently to her support than if he were at a distance. On these accounts, therefore, he determined to remain in his present employment for some time at least—this was till the ensuing term, when it was proposed that the whole family should proceed to Edinburgh, to join their head; and this was stated in reply to James' father, who, though he longed to have his boy with him, acquiesced in its propriety; and thus matters stood for several weeks, when it was found that James' strength was unequal to the labour imposed on him. The poor lad was long unwilling to admit this, even to himself, and continued to toil on with uncomplaining perseverance; but a mother's anxiety and scrutinizing solicitude soon discovered what he would have concealed. She saw, from his wan cheek and sunken eye, that he was tasked beyond his strength, and that a continuance much longer in his present employment might even endanger his life. Impressed with this idea, she insisted on him quitting it, and proceeding immediately to Edinburgh to join his father.

"But, mother," said the affectionate boy, "what will you do without me? My wages, though small, are a great help to you."

"They are, James, no doubt," replied his mother; "but what are your wages, or what would all the gold

and silver in the world be to me, compared to your life, my child? Think ye that anything could compensate that to your mother, James? No, no; all the wealth of the Indies, my son, would be nothing to me, if anything was to happen you. Besides, you can help me even where you are going. You can remit me a little of your wages, along with what your father sends from his; and, at the term, you know, which is now only four months distant, we will all be together again, and as happy as the day's long."

Thus reasoned with, and feeling his own physical inadequacy to continue in his present employment, the boy finally consented to leave it, and to proceed to Edinburgh, to join his father. It was not thought necessary to give the latter any previous intimation of this change in his son's views; and no communication, therefore, took place on the subject.

The day fixed for the boy's departure having arrived, a little bundle, containing some small articles of wearing apparel, and some bread and cheese, was made up for him by the hands of his doting mother, whose tears fell fast and thick on the little humble package, as she tied it up. This completed, the boy took down a staff from amongst many that were hung to the roof of the cottage, thrust one end of it through the bundle, shouldered it manfully, clapped his bonnet on his head, and was about suddenly to rush out of the house, finding that he could not stand a more deliberate parting; when his mother, flying after him, caught him by the arm just as he had reached the door, and, murmuring his name, clasped him in her arms, and, in silent anguish, pressed him convulsively to her bosom. The weeping boy returned the fond embrace of his mother; but, at length, tore himself away, and hurried off, with a speed that soon carried him out of her sight.

The lad had now a long journey before him, not less than a hundred and fifty miles, the whole of which was to be performed on foot, for there were then no conveyances on his intended route; and, although there had, he had no money to pay for their use; but, as he was active and vigorous, and accustomed to rove over his native hills like a young deer, a journey on foot of even a hundred and fifty miles had nothing formidable whatever in it for him; and it was, therefore, with a fearless heart and bounding step that he now took the long, wild, and dreary highland road, that was to conduct him to the city in which his father resided.

In about four months after the boy had left home to join his father in Edinburgh, his mother, with her two daughters, also proceeded to that city, and for the same purpose; the period having arrived which, according to previous understanding, was to see the family once more united under one roof. We will not attempt to describe the poor mother's feelings of joyous anticipation on this occasion, as she looked forward to the exquisite happiness of embracing the two objects whom she loved best on earth, her husband and son. These feelings were such as the reader can imagine for himself without our aid or interference.

On M'Lauchlane's wife and daughters arriving, which they did in due time and in safety, at the humble domicile which the farmer's dutiful affection had provided for them in Edinburgh, the first question she asked of her husband, and she put it ere she had yet fairly entered his door, was—

"Where is James? Where is my dear boy, Fergus?"

"Why, Margaret," replied M'Lauchlane, laughingly, "you should know that fully better than I do. Where did you leave him?" The boy had never reached his father's house.

"Come, come, now, Fergus, none of your tricks," said his wife, smiling. "Tell me where my boy is—I cannot rest till I see him."

"Ha, ha!" rejoined her husband, now laughing outright, "you keep up the farce very well, Margaret; but, come, now, let James be produced; for *I* am impatient to see him. You want to tantalize me a little."

"Or rather it is you that wish to tantalize me, Fergus," replied his wife, good-humouredly; "but do not keep me longer in pain, I beseech you. Go and bring James to me immediately. Do now, I entreat of you."

"Margaret," said M'Lauchlane, now somewhat alarmedly—for the earnest manner of his wife struck him as very strange, and as carrying very little of jocularity in it—"Margaret," he said, gravely, "is this jest or earnest? Is James not with you?—and, if he is not, where is he?"

"Gracious heavens!" exclaimed his wife, in an agony of horror—she in turn having marked the serious manner of her husband—"what is this come over us? O Fergus, Fergus," she said, in dreadful agitation, and flinging her arms around her husband in wild despair, "has not James been with you for these three months past? He left home to come to you then, and I always believed him to be with you. O my God, my God! where is my child? What has come over my boy?" And she gave way to a fearful and uncontrollable paroxysm of grief.

During this scene, her husband sat silent and motionless; but there were dreadful workings going on in his bosom. His face was deadly pale, and his lips quivered with agonizing emotion.

"I have never seen him, Margaret," he at length said, in a slow and solemn tone—"never seen him. What has come over my boy?" And the strong man burst into tears.

We need not prolong our description of the scene of

misery which ensued on the appalling discovery being made, as it now was, that the poor boy had never reached his destination. His distracted father instantly set about the apparently hopeless task of ascertaining what had been his fate; but, for some weeks after, all remained as great a mystery as ever; and no exertion or inquiries he could make, led to the slightest elucidation of the fact. At length, however, a clue to the mystery was obtained. It was gradually unwarped, and a train of circumstances finally unfolded the dreadful tale. In disclosing this tale to the reader, however, we have no occasion whatever to go through the tedious and digressive process by which M'Lauchlane ultimately arrived at the history of his unfortunate son's fate. Ours is a much simpler and much easier task. It is merely to place the facts in their order, divested of all extraneous matter; and this will be best done by our retrogressing a little, and resuming the history of the unhappy boy's proceedings after leaving his mother, at the point where we left it.

On the evening of the second day after his departure, the lad arrived at Stirling, and had thus accomplished about half his journey. On reaching this town, where he intended remaining for the night, young M'Lauchlane repaired to a certain public-house, which he knew, by report, to be much frequented by his countrymen, when going to and from the Highlands and the low country. This house was usually crowded with guests; but it happened that it contained but one on the night of his arrival. The solitary stranger was an Irishman, on his way to Edinburgh, as he said, to look for employment. Between young M'Lauchlane and this person—they being the only two guests in the house—a familiar footing was soon established, chiefly through the advances of the latter, who affected a sudden and strong liking for his young companion, whom he insisted on treating with some liquor. In the morning, they

breakfasted together, and, immediately after, set out together for Edinburgh—M'Lauchlane delighted with the kindness and rattling off-hand glee of his companion, who seemed, to his unsuspicious and unsophisticated nature, one of the best and merriest fellows he had ever met with. In place, however, of showing an anxiety to prosecute the journey with the expedition natural to those seeking a distant destination, M'Lauchlane's companion seemed bent on living by the way. Every mile, and often within shorter distances, he insisted on his young friend's taking some refreshment with him. He would, in truth, scarcely pass a single public-house on the road; but he paid, in every instance, for the entertainment to which he invited his companion. Two consequences resulted from this manner of proceeding. These were—young M'Lauchlane's getting, for the first time in his life, somewhat intoxicated; and the expiry of the day, before they had completed their journey that comprehended the distance between Stirling and Edinburgh. The shades of evening were thus just beginning to gather, as the travellers reached a small village about six or seven miles from Edinburgh; and it had become pretty dark by the time they had got midway between the two places just named. At this particular locality, young M'Lauchlane and his companion passed a well-dressed, respectable-looking, elderly man, on the road, who was going in the same direction with themselves. On having gone beyond him, about the distance of a hundred yards or so, the Irishman suddenly stopped, and addressing his young friend, said—

"I owe that old rascal that we passed just now, a grudge, and have a good mind to go back and give him a taste of this twig, by way of recompense"—shaking a stout cudgel that he carried in his hand. "Will you lend me a hand?"

Stupefied, or rather, perhaps, distracted with the drink

which he had swallowed, the poor, unreflecting boy at once agreed to assist his friend in revenging the injuries of which he complained. What these were, or when, where, or how they had taken place, he never thought of inquiring. It was enough for him that his companion had been injured, and enough also for him was the assertion of the latter that he had been so, and that the old man they had just passed was the inflictor of this injury.

In a minute after, the old man, whom they had now approached, was knocked down by the bludgeon of the Irishman—young M'Lauchlane standing close by. On his falling—

"Tip his watch there," said the former, in a hurried whisper to his companion, at the same time nudging him with his elbow; "and feel if the old fellow has any clink in his pockets. Out with it if he has. He owes me ten times more than he has about him, let that be what it may."

Without a moment's thought or hesitation, the unthinking boy, doing as he was desired, flung himself on the prostrate old man, seized his watch chain, and had just dragged it from its pocket, when he was seized by the collar from behind. On turning round, he found himself in the custody of two men, who had come up accidentally, unheard and unobserved, at least by him; but not by his companion, who, aware of their approach, had, without giving the unfortunate lad warning, darted through a hedge, and disappeared. It was in vain that the unhappy youth, on perceiving the dreadful predicament in which he stood, urged the extenuating facts of the case to his captors. All the circumstances of a highway robbery, aggravated by personal violence, were too apparent, and too clearly referable to M'Lauchlane as the perpetrator, to allow of anything he might assert to the contrary being for an instant believed.

On the recovery of the old man (whose face was streaming with blood) from the temporary stupefaction which the blow he had been struck had caused, M'Lauchlane was conveyed a prisoner to Edinburgh, handed over to the police, and eventually thrown into jail on a capital charge.

We may here pause a moment to remark that, at the period of our tale, the penal code of this country was enforced, with the most unrelenting ferocity, against all offenders who came within the reach of its sanguinary enactments. Mercy was then unknown in the dispensation of the criminal laws, which, written in blood, were executed to the letter, without regard to any of those considerations which are now permitted to have their influence on the side of clemency. The ultimate fate of the poor Highland boy may be anticipated; and this the more certainly, that his seducer was never taken, or even heard of; so that no chance was left him of the facts of his unhappy case being ascertained.

Shortly after being committed to prison, he was capitally indicted to stand trial before the court, which happened to be held in Edinburgh about six weeks after his apprehension; and, on the evidence of the old man and the two persons who had assisted in his capture, he was convicted of highway robbery, condemned to death, and actually executed at the usual place of execution; neither the boy's extreme youth, nor the extenuating circumstances connected with his case (which, indeed, the Court was not bound to believe, seeing there was only his own bare unsupported assertion of the facts), having the slightest effect on his judges, who, partaking at once of the spirit of the times and of the laws, were sternly rigorous in the execution of what they conceived to be their duty—seeing no safety for society but in a frequent and unsparing use of the gibbet.

We have now to explain the most extraordinary part o

this piteous case—and that is, how it was that the poor boy's parents knew nothing of his miserable fate till it was discovered by the inquiry of which we shall shortly speak. In the first place, his father took it for granted that he was at home with his mother, and his mother believed that he was with his father, and thus his absence was known to neither; and, therefore, no unusual interest regarding him was excited. During his confinement, and at all his precognitions, the infatuated boy steadily refused—though for what reason we know not—to give up his name, or to give any account of himself whatever. He would neither tell where he came from, where or to whom he was going, nor what nor who were his parents; and in this resolution he remained to the last; and, as no one knew him, he was thus finally executed, without any single particular being known regarding him, excepting that for which he suffered. Neither could he be prevailed upon to make known his situation to any of his friends. In short, he seemed to have determined to prevent his fate from ever being associated with his identity.

What his motives were for this extraordinary conduct—whether it arose from a fear of disgracing his family, or from tenderness to the feelings of his parents—we cannot tell, nor will we trouble the reader with conjectures which he can make as well for himself. We content ourselves with relating the facts of the melancholy case, as they actually and truly occurred.

It was by an inquiry at the police-office of Edinburgh, whither he had gone, as a last expedient, to endeavour to find some trace of his son, that M'Lauchlane obtained the intelligence that led to the discovery of his unhappy fate. He had gone to the office, however, without the most remote idea that he should there learn anything of his boy as a violator of the laws, but merely as a repository of general intelligence on such subjects as that in which he

was at the moment interested. Having stated his errand to two officers whom he found there, they asked him to describe the boy. This he did; when the men looked significantly at each other. Poor M'Lauchlane observed the look; and he felt his heart failing him, as he imagined, and too truly, that he saw in it something ominous.

"Do you know anything of my boy?" he said, looking piteously at the officers.

They made no reply, but seemed a good deal discomposed. They felt for the unfortunate father—having little or no doubt, from the personal description, and other particulars he gave of the boy, that it was he who had been executed for the robbery on the Stirling road.

"Tell me, for God's sake, if you know anything of my son," said the poor father, imploringly, after waiting some time in vain for an answer to his first inquiry of a similar kind.

The men would have still evaded a reply, and were, indeed, both edging out of the apartment, to avoid being further pressed on the subject, when M'Lauchlane seized one of them by the arm, and besought him not to leave him, without giving him what information he possessed on the subject of his inquiry. "Has any accident happened him?" said the miserable father. "Is he dead? Tell me, for Heaven's sake, tell me the worst at once. I can bear it. If he is dead, I say, God's will be done. Is it so or not, my friend?" again said M'Lauchlane, with a look of wretchedness that the man could not resist.

"I am afraid he is," was the reply.

"Still, I say God's will be done," said M'Lauchlane, endeavouring to display a composure he was far, very far from feeling. He next inquired into the time and manner of his death. On being informed, the unhappy man instantly sank down on the floor in a state of insensibility. He had little dreamt of such a horrible catastrophe; and,

however resigned he might have been to his boy's having met with a natural death, his fortitude was unequal to the dreadful trial it was now called on to sustain. On coming again to himself, the unfortunate man left the office without exchanging a word with any one, and returned to his own house. When he entered, his wife, as was her usual practice, eagerly inquired if he had yet heard any tidings of their son; but she soon saw that she had no occasion whatever to put the question. The haggard countenance of her husband—a countenance in which the utmost depth of human misery was strongly depicted—assured her at once that tidings had been heard of the boy, and that these were of the most dismal kind.

"He's dead, then," she screamed out, on looking on the wo-begone, or rather horror-stricken face of her husband —"my boy is gone." And she flung herself on the floor in a paroxysm of grief and despair.

To his wife's exclamations, M'Lauchlane made no reply, but threw himself on a bed, and buried his head beneath the clothes. But this covering did not conceal the dreadful writhings of the crushed spirit beneath. The bed-clothes heaved with the violent emotions that shook the powerful frame of the miserable sufferer. From that bed M'Lauchlane never again rose. He never, however, told his wife of the unhappy death her son had died; steadily and even sternly resisting all the importunities on that appalling subject; and whether she ever learned it, we are not aware.

MAJOR WEIR'S COACH.

A LEGEND OF EDINBURGH.*

THE time of our story was September, early in the seventies of the last century, or it might be the end of the sixties —it matters not much as to the year—but it was in the month of September, when parties and politics had set the freemen and burgesses of the royal burghs by the ears—when feasting and caballing formed almost their whole employment. The exaltation of themselves or party friends to the civic honours engrossed their whole attention, and neither money nor time was grudgingly bestowed to obtain their objects. The embellishment and improvement of the city of Edinburgh were keenly urged and carried on by one party, at the head of which was Provost Drummond. He was keenly opposed by another, which, though fewer in number, and not so well organized, was not to be despised; for it only wanted a leader of nerve and tact to stop or utterly undo all that had been done, and keep the city, as it had been for more than a century, in a position of stately decay. The wild project of building a bridge over the North Loch was keenly contested; and ruin and

* A legend, similar to that here given, was current in Glasgow a number of years ago, and for ages before. The hero's name was Bob Dragon, whose income, when alive, was said to have been one guinea a minute. His coachman and horses were said, as those of the major, to want the heads. The most curious trait of the Glasgow goblin horses, was that they went down to the river to drink, although they had no heads. The superstitions of most European countries have a similar origin: the Germans have their spectre huntsman; the coaches and horses of Major Weir and Bob Dragon are of the same character. The antiquary will find the trial of Major Weir in Pitcairn's "Criminal Trials;" and the lover of such stories may consult "Satan's Invisible World Discovered."—ED.

bankruptcy were foretold to the good town, if the provost and his party were not put out of the council before it was begun to be carried into execution.

The heavens were illuminated by a glorious harvest moon, far in her southings; the High Street was deep in shade, like a long dark avenue; the dim oil lamps, perched high upon their wooden posts, few and far between, gleamed in the darkness like glow-worms—as two portly figures were seen in earnest discourse, walking, not with steady step, up the High Street.

"By my troth, deacon!" said one of them, "I fear Luckie Bell has had too much of our company this night. I had no idea it was so late. There is the eighth chime of St. Giles': what hour will strike?"

"Deil may care for me, Treasurer Kerr!" hiccuped the deacon.

"Preserve me, deacon!" replied the treasurer, "it has struck twelve! What shall I say to the wife? It's to-morrow, deacon! it's to-morrow!"

"Whisht, man, whisht! and no speak with such a melancholy voice," said the other. "Are you afraid of Kate? What have we to do with to-morrow? It is a day we shall never see, were we to live as long as Methusalem; for, auld as he was, he never saw 'to-morrow.' It's always to come, with its cares or joy." And the deacon stood and laughed aloud at his conceit. "Let to-morrow care for itself, Tom, say I. What can Kate say to you? What the deil need you care? Have we not had a happy evening? Have we not been well employed?" And they again moved on towards the Castlehill, where the deacon resided.

Thomas Kerr was treasurer of the incorporation, and hoped at this election to succeed his present companion, whose influence in the incorporation was great, and to secure which he was, for the time, his humble servant, and assiduous in his attentions to him—so much so, that, al-

though his own domicile was in St. Mary's Wynd, at the other extremity of the High Street, his ambition had overcome his fears of his better half, and, still ascending the long street, he resolved to accompany the deacon home; not, however, without some strong misgivings as to what he might encounter at his return. Both were in that happy state of excitement when cares and fears press lightly on the human mind; but the deacon, who had presided at the meeting, and spoken a good deal, was much more overcome than his treasurer; and the liquor had made him loquacious.

"Tom, man," again said the deacon, "you walk by my side as douce as if you were afraid to meet Major Weir in his coach on your way down the wynd to Kate. Be cheerful man, as I am. Tell her she will be deaconess in a fortnight, and that will quiet her clatter, or I know not what will please her; they are all fond of honours. We have done good work this night—secured two votes against Drummond; other three would graze him. Pluck up your spirit, Tom, and be active; if we fail, the whole town will be turned upside down—confound him, and his wild projects, of what he calls improvements! The deil be in me, if I can help thinking—and it sticks in my gizzard yet—that he was at the bottom of the pulling down of my outside stair, by these drunken fellows of masons; the more by token that, when, after much trouble, I discovered them, and had them all safe in the guardhouse, he took a small bail, and only fined them two shillings a-piece, when it caused me an expense of ten good pounds to repair the mischief they had done; and, more than that, I was forced to erect it inside the walls; for they would not allow me to put it as it was, or grant me a Dean of Guild warrant on any other terms. They said it cumbered the foot-pavement, although, as you know, it had stood for fifty years. From that day to this I have been his firm opponent in

and out of the council. Tom, are ye asleep? Where are your eyes? What high new wall is this? See, see, man!"

"This beats all he has done yet!" said the treasurer; "a high white wall across the High Street, and neither slap nor style that I can see! Wonderful, wonderful! A strange man that provost!"

"He has done it to vex me, since I came down to Luckie Bell's," replied the deacon. "It was not there in the early part of the evening. He must have had a hundred masons at it. But I'll make him repent this frolic to-morrow in the council, or my name is not Deacon Dickson!"

"What can he mean by it, deacon?" rejoined the other. "I see no purpose it can serve, for my part."

"But it does serve a purpose," hiccuped the deacon; "It will prevent me from getting home. It is done through malice against me, for the efforts I am making to get him and his party out of the council."

During the latter part of this discourse, they had walked, or rather staggered, from side to side of the street. Between the pillars that, before the great fires in Edinburgh, formed the base of the high tenement standing there, and St. Giles' Church, being the entrance into the Parliament Square, and between St. Giles' and the Exchange buildings, the full moon threw a stream of light, filling both the openings, and leaving all above and below involved in deep shade. It was the moon's rays thus thrown upon the ground, and reaching up to the second windows of the houses, that formed the wall which the two officials observed.

"Deil tak me," ejaculated the deacon, "but this is a fine trick to play upon the deacon of an incorporation in his own town! Were it not for exposing myself at this untimeous hour, I would raise the town, and pull it down at the head of the people. Faith, Tom, I will do it!" And he was on the point of shouting aloud at the pitch of his

voice, when the more prudent treasurer put his hand upon the mouth of the enraged deacon.

"For mercy's sake, be quiet!" said he. "What are you going to be about? Is this a time of night for a member of council to make a riot, and expose himself in the High Street? To-morrow will be time enough to pull it down by force, if you cannot get a vote of the council to authorise it. No doubt it is a round-about way and a sair climb; but just, like a wise and prudent man, as you always are, put up with it for one night, and come along down the Fishmarket Close, up the Cowgate, and climb the West Bow, to the deaconess, who, I have no doubt, is weary waiting on you."

"Faith, Tom, I am in part persuaded you advise well for once," replied the deacon; "so I will act upon it, although I am your deacon, and all advice ought to come from me."

And away they trudged. Both were corpulent men; but the deacon, having been several times in the council, was by much the heavier of the two. Down they went by the Fishmarket Close, and up the Cowgate, the deacon, sulky and silent, meditating all the way vengeance against the provost; but, in ascending the steep and winding Bow, his patience entirely left him; he stopped, more than once, to wipe the perspiration from his brow, recover his breath, and mutter curses on the head of the official. At length, they reached the deacon's home, where his patient spouse waited his arrival. Without uttering a word, he threw himself upon a chair, placing his hat and wig upon a table. It was some minutes before he recovered his breath sufficiently to answer the questions of his anxious wife, or give vent to the anger that was consuming him. At length, to the fifty-times put questions of—

"Deacon, what has vexed you so sorely? what has happened to keep you so late?" he broke forth—

"What vexes me? what has kept me so late? You may, with good reason, inquire that, woman. Our pretty provost is the sole cause. You may be thankful that you have seen my face this night." And he commenced and gave an exaggerated account of the immense wall that the provost had caused to be built, from the Crames to the Royal Exchange, reaching as high as the third story of the houses; and the great length of time he had been detained in examining it, to discover a way to get over or through it—all which the simple deaconess believed, and heartily joined her husband in abusing the provost.

"Had a wall been built across the Castlehill," she said, "when the highlandmen were in the town, and the cannon balls flying down the street, I could have known the use of it; but to build a wall between the Crames and the Royal Exchange, to keep the Lawnmarket and Castlehill people from kirk and market—surely the man's mad!"

The treasurer had been for some time gone ere the worthy couple retired to rest, big with the events that were to be transacted on the morrow, for the downfall of the innovating provost. The morning was still grey, the sun was not above the horizon, when the deaconess, as was her wont, arose to begin her household duties; but, anxious to communicate the strange conduct of the provost, in raising the wall of partition in the city, she seized her water stoups, and hurried to the public well at the Bowhead, to replenish them, and ease her overcharged mind of the mighty circumstance. Early as the hour was, many of the wives of the good citizens were already there, seated on their water stoups, and awaiting their turn to be supplied —their shrill voices mixing with those of the more sonorous tones of the highland water-carriers, and rising in violent contention on the stillness of the morning, like the confusion of Babel.

The sensation caused by the relation of the deaconess of

her husband's adventure of the preceding evening, was nothing impaired by the story being related at second-hand. Arms were raised in astonishment as she proceeded with her marvellous tale of the high wall built in so short a space by the provost. After some time spent in fruitless debate, it was agreed that they should go down in a body and examine this bold encroachment upon the citizens—and away they went, with the indignant deaconess at their head.

For some hundred feet down the Lawnmarket, the buildings of the jail and Luckenbooths hid that part of the street from the phalanx of Amazons; but, intent to reconnoitre where the wall of offence was said to stand, they reached the Luckenbooths, and a shout of laughter and derision burst from the band. The deaconess stood petrified, the image of shame and anger. No wall was there—everything stood as it had done for years!

"Lucky Dickson," cried one, "ye hae gien us a gowk's errand. I trow the deacon has been fu' yestreen. Where is the fearfu wa' ye spak o', that he neither could get through nor owre? Ha! ha! ha!"

"Did ye really believe what he told you, Mrs. Dickson?" screamed another. "It was a silly excuse for being owre late with his cronies. He surely thinks you a silly woman to believe such tales. Were my husband to serve me so, I would let him hear of it on the deafest side of his head."

"You need not doubt but that he shall hear of it," responded the deaconess; "and that before long. But, dear me, there must have been some witchcraft played off upon him and the treasurer last night; for, as true as death, they baith said they saw it with their een. There's been glamour in it. I fear Major Weir is playing more tricks in the town than riding his coach. There was no cause to tell me a lie as an excuse, for I am always happy to see him come hame safe at ony hour."

By this time they had returned to the well, where they resumed their water vessels and hurried home, some to report the strange adventure the deacon had encountered the night before, and the deaconess to tell her better half of the delusion he had been under. Before breakfast time, the story was in every one's mouth, from the Castle to the Abbey-gate, and as far as the town extended. On a clear moonlight night, for many years afterwards, Deacon Dickson's dike was pointed out by the inhabitants; and at jovial parties we have heard it said—"Sit still a little longer; we are all sober enough to get over Deacon Dickson's wall."

The treasurer, who was not so muddled by the effect of the evening's entertainment as the deacon, yet still impressed by the idea of the wall, proceeded homewards by the same route whereby he had reached the deacon's, but now much refreshed by the walk, and night, or rather morning air—for it was nearly one o'clock. As he approached the Bow-foot Well, the sobbing of a female broke the stillness of the night: he paused for a few minutes, and, looking towards the spot from whence the sound came, urged by humanity, he drew more near, till he perceived an aged female almost concealed by the dark shade of the well, against which she leaned to support herself. As soon as he saw her distinctly, with an emotion of grief and surprise he exclaimed—

"Mrs. Horner!—what has happened? Why are you here at this untimeous hour?—or what is the cause of your grief?"

"Thomas Kerr, replied she, "I am a poor unfortunate woman, whom God alone can help. Pass on, and leave me to my misery." And she buried her face in her hands, while the large drops of anguish welled through her withered fingers.

"I cannot leave you here in such a state," said he again.

"Come home, my good woman, and I shall accompany you."

"I have no home," was her sad reply. "Alas! I have no home but the grave. I am a poor, silly, undone woman, in my old age. Comfortable, and even rich as I was, I am now destitute. I have neither house nor hall to cover my grey hairs. Oh, if I were only dead and buried out of this sinful world, to hide the shame of my own child. An hour is scarce passed since I thought my heart would burst in my bosom before I would be enabled to reach the Greyfriars' churchyard, to lay my head upon Willie Horner's grave, and the graves of my innocent babes that sleep in peace by his side. I feared my strength would fail; for all I wish is to die there. I did reach the object of my wish, and laid myself upon the cold turf, and prayed for death to join as he had separated us; but my heart refused to break, and tears that were denied me before, began to stream from my eyes. The fear of unearthly sights came strong upon me, stronger even than my grief. Strange moanings and sounds came on the faint night wind, from Bloody Mackenzie's tomb, and the bright moonlight made the tombstones look like unearthly things. I rose and fled. I will tarry here, and die in sight of the gallows stone; for it was here my only brother fell, killed by a shot from cruel Porteous' gun; and on the fatal tree which that stone is meant to support, my grandfather cheerfully gave his testimony for the covenanted rights of a persecuted kirk. Leave me, Thomas Kerr—leave me to my destiny. I can die here with pleasure; and it is time I were dead. To whom can a mother look for comfort or pity, when her own son has turned her out upon a cold world? I am as Rachel mourning for her children. I will not be comforted." And the mourner wrapped her mantle round her head with the energy of despair, and, bending it upon the well, burst anew into an agony of sobs and tears.

The treasurer felt himself in an awkward situation. He paused, and began to revolve in his mind what was best to be done at the moment—whether to obey the widow or the dictates of humanity. His better feeling prompted him to stay and do all in his power for the mourner, whom he had known in happier times; but his caution and avarice, backed by the dread of his spouse, urged him, with a force he felt every moment less able to resist, to leave her and hurry home. As he stood irresolute, the voice of the stern monitor sounded in the auricles of his heart like the knell of doom, and roused into fearful energy feelings he had long treated lightly, or striven to suppress when they rose upon him with greater force. He ran like a guilty criminal from the spot. The wailings of the crushed and pitiable object he had left, had given them a force he had never before known, and he urged his way down the Cowgate head as if he wished to fly from himself—the traces of the evening's enjoyments having fled, and their place being supplied by the pangs of an awakened conscience. There was, indeed, too much cause for his agitation, often hinted at by his acquaintances, but in its full extent only known in his own family—a striking similarity between the situation of his own mother and that of Widow Horner. The cases of the two aged individuals agreed in all points, save that he had not yet turned her out of doors; and conscience told him that even that result had been prevented, more by the patient endurance of his worthy parent herself, than any kindly feeling on the part of her son.

The father of the treasurer, and the husband of Widow Horner, had both been industrious, and, for their rank in life, wealthy burgesses of the city. At their death, they had left their widows with an only child to succeed them and be a comfort to their mothers, who had struggled hard to retain and add to the wealth, until their sons were of

age to succeed and manage it for themselves. Their sole and rich reward, as they anticipated, would be the pleasure of witnessing the prosperity of their sons. That they would be ungrateful, was an idea so repugnant to their maternal feelings, that, for a moment, it was never harboured in their bosoms. A cruel reality was fated to falsify their anticipations.

The treasurer had, before he was twenty-five years of age, married a female, whom his fond mother had thought unworthy of her son; and to prevent the marriage she had certainly done all that lay in her power. Her endeavours and remonstrances had only served to hasten the event she wished so much to retard and hinder from taking place; the consequence was, that the hated alliance was made several weeks before she was made aware of it, by the kindness of a gossiping neighbour or two. Much as she felt, and sore as her heart was wrung, she, like a prudent woman, shed her tears of bitter anguish at the want of filial regard in her son, in secret. She at once resolved to pardon this act of ingratitude, and, for her son's sake, to receive her unwelcome daughter-in-law with all the kindness she could assume on the trying occasion. Not so her daughter-in-law, who was of an overbearing, subtile, and vindictive turn of mind. The mother of her husband had wounded her pride; she resolved never to forget or forgive; and, before she had crossed her threshold, a deep revenge was vowed against her, as soon as it was in her power to execute it. The first meeting was embarrassing on both sides; each had feelings to contend against and disguise; yet it passed off well to outward appearance—the widow from love to her son, striving to love his wife—the latter, again, with feigned smiles and meekness, affecting to gain her mother-in-law's esteem; and so well did she act her part, that, before many days after their first interview had passed, Thomas was requested to bring

his wife into the house, to reside in the family, and to save the expense of a separate establishment. From that hour the house of Widow Kerr began to cease to be her own, for the first few months almost imperceptibly. Thomas, although a spoiled child, was not naturally of an unfeeling disposition, but selfish and capricious from over-indulgence. Amidst all his faults, there was still a love and esteem of his mother, which his wife, seeing it would be dangerous openly to attack it, had resolved to undermine, and therefore laid her wicked schemes accordingly. In the presence of her husband, she was, for a time, all smiles and affability; but, in his absence, she said and did a thousand little nameless things, to tease and irritate the good old dame. This produced complaints to her son, who, when he spoke to his wife of them, was only answered by her tears and lamentations, for the misery she suffered in being the object of his mother's dislike. To himself she referred, if she did not do all in her power to please his mother. These scenes had become of almost daily occurrence, and were so artfully managed, that the mother had the appearance of being in the fault. Gradually, the son's affection became deadened towards his parent; she had ceased to complain, and now suffered in silence. For her there was no redress—for, in a fit of fondness, she had made over to her son all she possessed in the world. She was thus in his power; yet her heart revolted at exposing his cruelty. The revenge of the wife was not complete, even after the spirit of the victim was completely crushed, and she had ceased to complain. Often the malignant woman would affect lowness of spirits, and even tears, refusing to tell the cause of her grief until urged by endearments, and obtaining an assurance that he would not regard her folly in yielding to her feelings; but she could not help it—were it not for her love to him, she knew not in what she had ever offended his mother,

save in preferring him to every other lover who had sought her hand. Thus, partly by artifice, but more by her imperious turn of mind, which she had for years ceased to conceal, the treasurer was completely subdued to her dictation; and, by a just retribution, he was punished for his want of filial affection, for he was as much the sufferer from her temper as his mother was the victim of her malice. With a crushed heart, the old woman ate her morsel in the kitchen, moistened by her tears. Even her grandchildren were taught to insult and wound her feelings. So short-sighted is human nature, the parents did not perceive that by this proceeding they were laying rods in pickle for themselves, which, in due time, would be brought in use, when the recollection of their own conduct would give tenfold poignancy to every blow.

On the occasion to which we have alluded, the situation and wailings of Widow Horner still rung in the ears of the treasurer. All his acts of unkindness to his parent passed before him like a hideous phantasmagoria as he hurried down the Cowgate. He even became afraid of himself, as scene after scene arose to his awakened conscience—all the misery and indignities that had been heaped upon his parent by his termagant wife, he himself either looking on with indifference, or supporting his spouse in her cruelty. Goaded by remorse, he still hurried on. The celerity of his movements seemed to relieve him. He had formed no fixed resolution as to how he was to act upon his arrival at home. A dreamy idea floated in his tortured mind that he had some fearful act to perform to ease it, and do justice to his parent; yet, as often as he came to the resolution to dare every consequence, his courage would again quail at the thought of encountering one who had, in all contentions, ever been the victor, and riveted her chains the more closely around him on every attempt he had made to break them. In this pitiable state, he had got as

far towards home as the foot of the College Wynd, when the sound of a carriage approaching rapidly from the east roused him and put all other thoughts to flight. With a start of horror and alarm, he groaned—"The Lord have mercy upon me! The Major's coach! If I see it, my days are numbered." And, with an effort resembling the energy of despair, he rushed into a stair foot, and, placing both his hands upon his face to shut out from his sight the fearful object, supported himself by leaning upon the wall. As the sound increased, so did the treasurer's fears; but what words can express his agony when it drew up at the foot of the very stair in which he stood, and a sepulchral voice issued from it—

"Is he here?"

"Just come," was the reply in a similar tone.

"Then all's right."

"O God! have mercy on my sinful soul!" screamed the treasurer, as he sank senseless out of the foot of the stair upon the street.

How long he remained in this state, or what passed in the interval, he could give no account. When he awoke to consciousness, he found himself seated in a carriage jolting along at a great speed, supported on each side by what appeared to him headless trunks; for the bright moonlight shone in at the carriage window, and exhibited two heads detached from their bodies dangling from the top. The glance was momentary. Uttering a deep groan, he shut his eyes to avoid the fearful sight. He would have spoken; but his palsied tongue refused to move, even to implore for mercy. Wringing his hands in despair, he would have sunk to the bottom of the coach upon his knees, but was restrained by the two figures. He felt their grasp upon his arms, firm as one of his own vices. The same fearful voice he had first heard fell again on his ear—"Sit still. Utter no cry. Make a clean breast, as

you hope for mercy at the major's tribunal. He knows you well; but wishes to test your truth. Proceed!"

With a memory that called up every deed he had ever done, and sunk to nothingness any of the actions he had at one time thought good, he seemed as if he now stood before his Creator. All his days on earth appeared to have been one long black scene of sin and neglected duties. His head sunk upon his breast, and the tears of repentance moistened his bosom. When he had finished his minute confession, a pause ensued of a few minutes. The moon, now far in the west, was sinking behind a dense mass of clouds. The wind began to blow fitfully, with a melancholy sound, along the few objects that interrupted its way, and around the fearful conveyance in which he sat, more dead than alive. The measured tramp of the horses, and rattling of the carriage, fell on his ear like the knell of death. He felt a load at his heart, as if the blood refused to leave it and perform its functions. Human nature could not have sustained itself under such circumstances much longer. The carriage stopped; the door opened with violence; his breathing became like a quick succession of sobs; his ears whizzed, almost producing deafness. Still he was fearfully awake to every sensation; a painful vitality seemed to endow every nerve with tenfold its wonted activity; all were in action at the moment; his whole frame tingled; and the muscles seemed to quiver on his bones. The same hollow voice broke the silence.

"Thomas Kerr, your sincerity and contrition has delivered you from my power this once. Beware of a relapse. Go, do the duty of a son to your worthy parent. You have been a worse man than ever I was on earth. I have my parent's blessing with me in the midst of my sufferings; and there is a soothing in it which the wretched can alone feel."

Quick as thought he was lifted from the coach and

seated upon the ground. With the speed of a whirlwind, as it appeared to him, the carriage disappeared, and the sound died away. For some time he sat bewildered, as if he had fallen from the clouds. Gradually he began to breathe more freely, and felt as if a fearful nightmare had just passed away. Slowly the events of the night rose in regular succession. The forlorn and desolate widow; the hideous spectres in the coach, that, without heads, spake and moved with such energy—the whole now passed before him so vividly that he shuddered. At first he hoped all had been a fearful dream; but the cold, damp ground on which he sat banished the fond idea. He felt, in all its force, that he was now wide awake, as he groped with his hands and touched the damp grass beneath him. All around was enveloped in impenetrable darkness. Not one star shone in the murky sky. How much of the night had passed, or where he at present was, he had no means of ascertaining. The first use he made of his restored faculties was to rise upon his knees, and pour out his soul to God, imploring pardon and protection in this hour of suffering. He rose with a heart much lightened, and felt his energies restored. Stumbling onwards, he proceeded, he knew not whither, until, bruised by falls and faint from exhaustion, he again seated himself upon a stone, to wait patiently the approach of dawn. Thus, melancholy and pensive, he sat, eager to catch the faintest sound; but all was silent as the grave, save the faint rustling of the long grass, waving around him in the night breeze, that was chilling his vitals, as it, in fitful gusts, swept past him. The hope of surviving the night had almost forsaken him, when the distant tramp of a horse fell on his longing ears. Then the cheerful sound of a popular air, whistled to cheer the darkness, gladdened his heart. In an ecstasy of pleasure, he sprung to his feet. The rolling of wheels over the rugged road, was soon added to the cheering sounds. With caution he

approached them over hedge and ditch, until, dark as it was, he could discern the object of his search almost before him—a carrier's cart, with the driver seated upon the top, whistling and cracking his whip to the time.

"Stop friend, for mercy's sake, and take me up beside you."

"Na, na," replied the carrier; "I will do no such foolish action. Hap, Bassie! hap!" And, smacking his whip, the horse increased its speed. "Come not near my cart, or I will make Cæsar tear you in pieces. Look to him, Cæsar!" And the snarling of a dog gave fearful warning to the poor treasurer to keep at a distance; but, rendered desperate by his situation, he continued to follow, calling out—

"Stop, if you are a Christian; for mercy's sake, stop and hear me. I am a poor lost creature, sick and unable to harm, but rich enough to reward you, if you will save my life. I am no robber, but a decent burgess and freeman of Edinburgh; and where I am at present I cannot tell."

"Woo, Bassie! woo!" responded the carrier. "Silence, Cæsar! Preserve us from all evil! Amen! Sure you cannot be Thomas Kerr, whose shop is in Saint Mary's Wynd?"

"The very same; but who are you that know my voice?"

"Who should I be," rejoined he, "but Watty Clinkscales, the North-Berwick carrier, on my way to the town; for you may know well enough that Wednesday morning is my time to be in Edinburgh; but come up beside me, man, and do not stand longer there. If you have lost yourself, as you say, I will with pleasure give you a ride home this dark morning; but tell me how, in all the world, came you to be standing at the Figgate Whins, instead of being in your warm bed? I am thinking, friend Kerr, you have been at a corporation supper last night."

While the carrier was speaking, the treasurer mounted the cart, and took his seat beside him. They moved slowly on. To all the questions of the carrier, evasive answers were returned; the treasurer felt no desire to be communicative. As they reached the Watergate, the first rays of morning shone upon Arthur's Seat and the Calton Hill. Before they entered, the treasurer dismounted, having first rewarded his conveyer to the town, and proceeded to his home by the south back of the Canongate, faint and unwell. When he reached his own door, he was nearly exhausted. It was opened to him by his anxious mother, who had watched for him through the whole night. Alarmed by his haggard and sickly appearance, timidly she inquired what had happened to him, to cause such an alteration in his looks in so short a time. The tears started into his eyes as he looked at her venerable form, degraded by her attire. He took her hand in both his, and, pressing it to his lips, faltered out—

"Oh, my mother! can you pardon your undutiful son? Only say you will forgive me."

"Tammy, my bairn," she replied, "what have I to pardon? Is not all my pleasure in life to see you happy? What signifies what becomes of me, the few years I have to be on earth? But you are ill, my son—you are very ill!"

"I am indeed very unwell, both in body and mind," said he. "Say you pardon me, for the manner in which I have allowed you to be treated since my marriage; and give me your blessing, lest I die without hearing you pronounce it."

"Bless you, my Thomas, and all that is yours, my son! with my blessing, and the blessing of God, which is above all riches! But go to your bed, my bairn, and do not let me make dispeace in the family."

At this moment his spouse opened the door of the bed-

room, and began, in her usual manner, to rate and abuse him for keeping untimeous hours. Still holding his mother's hands in his, he commanded her, in a voice he had never before assumed to her, to be silent. She looked at him in amazement, as if she had doubted the reality of his presence; and was on the point of becoming more violent, when his fierce glance, immediately followed by the sunken, sickly look which one night of suffering had given him, alarmed her for his safety, and she desisted, anxiously assisting his mother to undress and put him to bed.

He soon fell into a troubled sleep, from which he awoke in the afternoon, unrefreshed and feverish. His wife was seated by his bed when he awoke. Turning his languid eye towards her, he inquired for his mother. A scene of angry altercation would have ensued; but he was too ill to reply to the irritating language and reproaches of his spouse. The anger increased his fever, and delirium came on towards the evening. A physician was sent for, who at once pronounced his life to be in extreme danger; and, indeed, for many days it was despaired of.

The horrors of that night were the theme of his discourse, while the fever raged in his brain. The smallest noise, even the opening of a door, made him shreik and struggle to escape from those who watched him. His efforts were accompanied by cries for mercy from Major Weir; his bed was the coach, and his wife and mother the headless phantoms. Clinkscales had told the manner and where he had found him, on the morning he was taken ill. The sensation this excited through the city became extreme. Deacon Dickson told the hour in which he left his house, and the language of the sufferer filled up the space until he was met by the carrier. The nocturnal apparition of the major's carriage had, for many years, been a nursery tale of Edinburgh. Many firmly believed in its reality. There were not awanting several who affirmed they had

seen it; and scarce an inhabitant of the Cowgate or St. Mary's Wynd, but thought they had heard it often before the present occurrence.

That the treasurer had by some means been transported to the Figgate Whins in the major's coach, a great many firmly believed; for two of the incorporation on the same night had been alarmed by a coach driving furiously down the Cowgate; but they could not describe its appearance, as they had hid themselves until it passed, fearful of seeing the spectre carriage and its unearthly attendants. It was at least certain that, of late, many had been aroused out of their sleep by the noise of a carriage; and, the report gaining ground, the terror of the citizens became so great that few chose to be upon any of the streets after twelve at night, unless urged by extreme necessity. This state of foolish alarm, as the magistrates called it, could not be allowed to continue within their jurisdiction; and they resolved to investigate the whole affair. Several were examined privately; but the treasurer was too ill to be spoken to, even by his friend the deacon. There was a strange harmony in the statements of several who had really distinctly heard the sounds of horses' feet, and the rumbling of a carriage, and the ravings of the unfortunate treasurer. The authorities were completely at a stand how to proceed. Several shook their heads and looked grave; others proposed to request the ministers of the city to watch the major's carriage, and pray it out of the city. But the provost's committee sent for the captain of the train-bands, and consulted with him: he agreed to have twelve of the band and six of the town-guard in readiness by twelve at night, to waylay the cause of annoyance, should it make its appearance, and unravel the mystery. That there was some unlawful purpose connected with it, several of the council had little doubt. These meetings were private, and the proceedings are not on record to

guide us. It was with considerable difficulty the captain could get the number of his band required for the duty; they chose rather to pay the fine, believing it to be a real affair of diablerie; for their earliest recollections were associated with the truth of the major's night airings. For several nights the watch was strictly kept by many of the citizens; but in vain. No appearance disturbed the usual stillness of the night in the city; not even the sound of a carriage was heard. The whole affair gradually lost its intense interest, and ceased to be the engrossing theme of conversation. The sceptics triumphed over their believing acquaintance; and the mysterious occurrence was allowed to rest.

The election week for deacon of the crafts at length arrived. All was bustle among the freemen; the rival candidates canvassing and treating, and their partisans bustling about everywhere. City politics ran high; but the treasurer, although recovered, was still too weak to take an active part in the proceedings. Deacon Dickson, on this account, redoubled his exertions—for the indisposition of his treasurer had deranged his plans; and it was of great importance, in his eyes, to have one of his party elected in his place. Had Kerr been able to move about, to visit and flatter his supporters, his election was next to certain, so well had the whole affair been managed. Kerr was accordingly dropped by him, and a successor pitched upon, who could at this eventful period aid him in his efforts against the candidate of the Drummondites, as the supporters of the provost were called.

On the Thursday, when the long lists were voted, the deacon carried his list, and every one of the six were tried men, and hostile to the innovations of the provost and his party. The deacon was in great spirits, and told the treasurer, whom he visited as soon as his triumph was

secure, that, if not cut off the list in shortening the leet, his election was sure. On the list coming down from the council, neither Kerr nor the person Dickson wished were on the leet; both had been struck off, and the choice behoved to fall upon one of three, none of whom had hoped, at this time, to succeed to office. Their joy was so much the greater, and the election dinner not less substantial.

It was the evening of the election, closely bordering upon the morning—for all respected the Sabbath-day, and even on this joyous occasion, would not infringe upon it—that a party of some ten or twelve were seen to issue from one of the narrow closes in the High Street, two and two, arm in arm, dressed in the first style of fashion, with bushy wigs, cocked hats, and gold-headed canes. At their head was, now old Deacon Dickson, and his successor in office. They were on their way, accompanying their new deacon home to his residence, near the foot of St. Mary's Wynd in the Cowgate, and to congratulate the deaconess on her husband's elevation to the council. None of them were exactly tipsy; but in that middle state when men do not stand upon niceties, neither are scared by trifles. The fears of the major's coach were not upon them; or, if any thought of it came over them, their numbers gave them confidence. Leaving the High Street, they proceeded down Merlin's Wynd to the Cowgate. Scarce had the head of the procession emerged from the dark thoroughfare, when the sound of a carriage, in rapid advance, fell on their astonished ears. The front stood still, and would have retreated back into the wynd, but could not; for those behind, unconscious of the cause of the stoppage, urged on and forced them out into the street. There was not a moment for reflection, scarce to utter a cry, before the fearful equipage was full upon them. Retreat was still impossible; and those in front, by the pressure from behind,

becoming desperate by their situation, the two deacons seized the reins of the horses, to prevent their being ridden over. In a second, the head of the coachman (held in his hand!) was launched at Deacon Dickson, with so true an aim that it felled him to the ground, with the loss of his hat and wig. Though stunned by the blow, his presence of mind did not forsake him. Still holding on by the reins, and dragged by the horses, he called lustily for his companions to cut the traces. The head of the coachman, in the meantime, had returned to his hand, and been launched forth, with various effect, on the aggressors. Other heads flew from the windows on each side, and from the coach-box, in rapid, darting motions. The cries of the assailants resounded through the stillness of the night; fear had fled their bosoms; there was scarce one but had received contusions from the flying heads, and rage urged them on to revenge. Candles began to appear at the windows, exhibiting faces pale with fear. Some of the bolder of the male inhabitants, recognising the voice of some relative or acquaintance in the cries of the assailants, ran to the street and joined the fray. Dickson, who had never relinquished his first hold, recovered himself, severely hurt as he was by the feet of the horses, which were urged on, short as the struggle was, up to the College Wynd, in spite of the resistance. At the moment the carriage reached the foot of the wynd, the door on the left burst open, and two figures leaped out, disappearing instantly, although closely pursued. In the confusion of the pursuit, the coachman also disappeared. No one could tell how, or in what manner he had fled, he appeared to fall from the box among the crowd; and, when several stooped to lift and secure him, all that remained in their hands was a greatcoat, with basket work within the shoulders, so contrived as to conceal the head and neck of the wearer, to which was fastened a stout cord, the other end of which was attached

to an artificial head, entangled in the strife between the horses and the pole of the coach. Two similar dresses were also found inside. The coach was heavily laden; but with what, the authorities never could discover, although envious persons said that several of the tradesmen's wives in the Cowgate afterwards wore silk gowns that had never before had one in their family, had better and stronger tea at their parties, and absolutely abounded in tobacco for many weeks. But whether these were the spoils of the combat with the infernal coach, or the natural results of successful industry, was long a matter of debate.

As for the coach and horses, they became the prize of Deacon Dickson and his friends, never having been claimed by the major. The sensation created on the following day by the exaggerated reports of the fearful rencounter and unheard of bravery of the tradesmen, was in proportion to the occasion. Several of the assailants were reported to have been killed, and, among the rest, the deacon. For several days, the inn-yard of the White Hart was crowded to excess to view the carriage and horses. As for the deacon, no doubt, he was considerably bruised about the legs; but the glory he had acquired was a medicine far more efficacious to his hurts than any the faculty could have prescribed. At the first toll of the bells for church, he was seen descending from the Castle Hill towards the Tron Church, limping much more, many thought, than there was occasion for, supported by his battered gold-headed cane on one side, and holding by the arm of the deaconess on the other. With an affected modesty, which no general after the most brilliant victory could better have assumed, he accepted the congratulations he had come out to receive. When he entered the church, a general whisper ran through it, and all eyes were upon him, while the

minister had not yet entered. This was the proudest moment of his life. He had achieved, with the assistance of a few friends, what the train-bands and city-guard had failed to accomplish; that it was more by accident, and against his will he had performed the feat, he never once allowed to enter his mind, and stoutly denied when he heard it hinted at by those who envied him the glory he had acquired.

As soon as the afternoon's service was over, he proceeded to the treasurer's house, to congratulate him on his re-election to the treasurership, and give a full account of his adventure. To his exaggerated account, Kerr listened with the most intense interest; a feeling of horror crept over his frame as the deacon dwelt upon the blow he had received from the coachman's head, and the efficacious manner in which the two inside phantoms had used theirs, concluding with—

"It was a fearful and unequal strife—devils against mortal men."

"Do you really think they were devils, deacon? Was it really their own heads they threw about?" said the treasurer.

"I am not clear to say they were devils," replied the other; "but they fought like devils. Severe blows they gave, as I feel this moment. They could not be anything canny; for they got out from among our hands like a flash of light."

The deacon's vanity would have tempted him to say he believed them to be not of this earth; but the same feeling restrained him. Where there had been so many actors in the affair, he had as yet had no opportunity of learning their sentiments; and, above all things, he hated to be in a minority, or made an object of ridicule. Turning aside the direct question of the treasurer, he continued—

"Whatever they were, the horses are two as bonny

blacks as any gentleman could wish to put into his carriage. By my troth, I have made a good adventure of it? I mean to propose, and I have no doubt I shall carry my motion, that they and the major's coach be sold, and the proceeds spent in a treat to the incorporation. Make haste, man, and get better. You are as welcome to a share as if you had been one of those present; although, indeed, I cannot give you a share of the glory of putting Major Weir and his devils to the rout—and no small glory it is, on the word of a deacon, treasurer."

The load that had for many days pressed down the treasurer's spirits gradually passed off as the deacon proceeded, and a new light shone on his mind; his countenance brightened up.

"Deacon," he said, "the truth begins to dawn upon me, and I feel a new man. Confess at once that the whole has been a contrivance of the smugglers to run their goods, availing themselves of the real major's coach. It was a bold game, deacon, and, like all unlawful games, a losing one in the end. Still, it is strange what inducement they could have had for their cruel conduct to me on that miserable night, or how I was enabled to survive, or retained my reason. I have been often lost in fearful misery upon this subject since the fever left me; but you, my friend, have restored peace to my mind."

And they parted for the evening. The treasurer's recovery was now most rapid. In a few days, all traces of his illness were nearly obliterated, and he went about his affairs as formerly. An altered man—all his wife's influence for evil was gone for ever; calmly and dispassionately he remonstrated with her; for a few days she struggled hard to retain her abused power; tears and threatened desertion of his house were used—but he heard her unmoved, still keeping his stern resolve with a quietness of manner which her cunning soon perceived it was not in

her power to shake. She ceased to endeavour to shake it. His mother was restored to her proper station, and all was henceforth peace and harmony.

Several years had rolled on. The deaconship was, next election, bestowed upon Treasurer Kerr. He had served with credit, and his business prospered. The adventure with the major's coach was only talked of as an event of times long passed, when, one forenoon, an elderly person, in a seaman's dress, much soiled, entered his workshop, and, addressing him by name, requested employment. Being very much in want of men at the time, he at once said he had no objection to employ him, if he was a good hand.

"I cannot say, I am, now what I once was in this same shop," he replied. "It is long since I forsook the craft; but, if you are willing to employ me, I will do my best."

The stranger was at once engaged, and gave satisfaction to his employer—betraying a knowledge of events that had happened to the family, and that were only traditionary to his master. His curiosity became awakened; to gratify which, he took the man home, one evening, after his day's work was over. For some time after they entered the house, the stranger became pensive and reserved—his eyes, every opportunity, wandering to the mother of his master, with a look of anxious suspense. At length, he arose from his seat, and said, in a voice tremulous with emotion—

"Mistress! my ever-revered mistress! have you entirely forgot Watty Brown, the runaway apprentice of your husband?"

"Watty Brown, the yellow-haired laddie," ejaculated she, "I can never forget. He was always a favourite of mine. You cannot be him; your hair is grey?"

"My good mistress, old and grey-headed as you see me," said he, "I am Watty Brown; but much has passed over my once yellow head to bleach it white as you see. My

master here was but an infant in your arms, when I left Edinburgh. Often have I rocked him in his cradle. After all that has passed, I am here again, safe. I am sure there is no one present would bring me into trouble for what is now so long passed."

"How time flies!" said she. "The Porteous mob is in my mind as if it had happened last week. O Watty! you were always a reckless lad. Sore, sore you have rued, I do not doubt, that night. Do tell us what has come of you since?"

"Well, mistress, you recollect there was little love between the apprentices of Edinburgh and Captain Porteous. All this might have passed off in smart skirmishes on a king's birthday, or so; but his brutal behaviour at poor Robinson's execution, and slaughter of the townsmen, could not be forgiven by lord or tradesman. Well, as all the land knows, he was condemned, and all were satisfied; for the guilty was to suffer. But his pardon came; the bloodshedder of the innocent was to leave the jail as if he had done nothing wrong! Was this to be endured? Murmurs and threats were in every tradesman's mouth; the feuds of the apprentices were quelled, for a time; all colours joined in hatred of the murderer. Yet no plan of operations was adopted. In this combustible frame of mind, the drums of the city beat to arms. I rushed from this very house to know the cause, and saw the trades' lads crowding towards the jail. I inquired what was their intention.

"'To execute righteous judgment!' a strange voice said, in the crowd.

"I returned to the shop; and, taking the forehammer, as the best weapon I could find, in my haste, with good will joined, and was at the door amongst the foremost of those who attempted to break it open. Numbers had torches. Lustily did I apply my hammer to its studded front. Vainly

did I exert myself, until fire was put to it, when it at length gave way. As I ceased from my efforts, one of the crowd, carrying a torch, put a guinea into my hand, and said—

"'Well done, my good lad. Take this; you have wrought for it. If you are like to come to trouble for this night's work, fly to Anstruther, and you will find a friend.'

"While he spoke, those who had entered the jail were dragging Porteous down the stairs. My heart melted within me at the piteous sight. My anger left me, as his wailing voice implored mercy. I left the throng, who were hurrying him up towards the Lawnmarket, and hastened back to the workshop, where I deposited the hammer, and threw myself upon my bed; but I could not remain. The image of the wretched man, as he was dragged forth, appeared to be by my side. Partly to know the result, partly to ease my mind, I went again into the street. The crowds were stealing quietly to their homes. From some neighbour apprentices I learned the fatal catastrophe. I now became greatly alarmed for my safety, as numbers who knew me well had seen my efforts against the door of the jail. Bitterly did I now regret the active part I had taken. My immediate impulse was to fly from the city; but in what direction I knew not. Thus irresolute, I stood at the Netherbow Port, when the same person that gave me the guinea at the jail-door approached to where I stood. Embracing the opportunity, I told him the fear I was in of being informed upon, when the magistrates began to investigate and endeavour to discover those who had been active in the affair.

"'Well, my good fellow, follow me. It will not serve your purpose standing there.'

"There were about a dozen along with him. We proceeded to the beach at Fisherrow—going round Arthur's Seat, by Duddingston—and were joined by many others. [illegible] by for them, on the beach, at a distance from

the harbour. We went on board and set sail for Fife, where we arrived before morning dawned. I found my new friend and acquaintance was captain and owner of a small vessel, who traded to the coast of Holland. He scrupled not to run a cargo upon his own account, without putting the revenue officers to any trouble, either measuring or weighing it. He had been the intimate friend of Robinson, and often sailed in the same vessel. I joined his crew; and, on the following day, we sailed for Antwerp. But why should I trouble you with the various turns my fortunes have taken for the last thirty-seven years? At times, I was stationary, and wrought at my trade; at others, I was at sea. My home has principally been in Rotterdam; but my heart has ever been in Auld Reekie. Many a time I joined the crew of a lugger, and clubbed my proportion of the adventure; my object being—more than the gain—to get a sight of it; for I feared to come to town—being ignorant as to how matters stood regarding my share in the Porteous riot. We heard in Holland only of the threats of the government; but I was always rejoiced to hear that no one had been convicted. Several years had passed before it was safe for me to return; and, when it was, I could not endure the thought of returning to be a bound apprentice, to serve out the few months of my engagement that were to run when I left my master. Years passed on. I had accumulated several hundred guilders, with the view of coming to end my days in Edinburgh, when I got acquainted with a townsman deeply engaged in the smuggling line. I unfortunately embarked my all. He had some associates in the Cowgate, who disposed of, to great advantage, any goods he succeeded in bringing to them. His colleagues on shore had provided a coach and horses, with suitable dresses, to personate Major Weir's carriage, agreeably to the most approved description. The coach and horses were furnished by an innkeeper,

whom they supplied with liquors at a low rate. My unfortunate adventure left the port, and I anxiously waited its return for several months; but neither ship nor friend made their appearance. At length he came to my lodgings in the utmost poverty—all had been lost. Of what use was complaint? He had lost ten times more than I had—everything had gone against him. His narrative was short. He reached the coast in safety, and landed his cargo in part, when he was forced to run for it, a revenue cutter coming in sight. After a long chase, he was forced to run his vessel on shore, near St. Andrew's, and got ashore with only his clothes, and the little cash he had on board. He returned to where his goods were deposited—all that were saved. The coach was rigged out, and reached the Cowgate in the usual manner, when it was attacked and captured, in spite of stout resistance, by a party of citizens. What of the goods remained in the neighbourhood of Musselburgh, were detained for the loss of the horses and coach. I was now sick of Holland, and resolved to return, poor as I left it, to the haunts of my happiest recollections. To be rich, and riches still accumulating in a foreign land, the idea of what we can at any time enjoy, a return—makes it bearable. But poverty and disappointment sadden the heart of the exile; and make the toil that would be counted light at home, a burden that sinks him early in a foreign grave."

"Did your partner make no mention of carrying off one of the townsmen in the coach?" said the treasurer.

"Excuse me, master, for not mentioning it," replied Walter. "He did give me a full account of all that happened to you, and all you said; and regretted, when he heard of your illness, what, at the time, he was forced to do in self-preservation. When you fell out of the stair he meant to enter, he knew not who you were—a friend he knew you could not be, for only other two in the city had his secret.

That you were a revenue officer, on the look-out for him, was his first idea. He was as much alarmed as you, until he found you were insensible. Not a moment was to be lost. The goods were hurried out, and you placed in the carriage, which was on its way from town before you showed any symptoms of returning consciousness. His first intention was to carry you on board his lugger, and convey you to Holland, then sell you to the Dutch East India Company, that you might never return to tell what you had been a witness of that night. The terror you were in, the sincerity of your confession, and belief that you were in the power of the major, saved you from the miserable fate he had fixed for you. Pity struggled against the caution and avarice which urged him to take you away. Pity triumphed—you had been both play and school-fellows in former years. You were released—you know the rest."

The wife and mother scarce breathed, while Wattie related the danger the treasurer had been in; he himself gave a shudder—all thanked God for his escape. Wattie Brown continued in his employ, as foreman over his work, and died about the year 1789. Widow Horner did not long survive that night of intense anguish—she died of a broken heart in her son's house. It was remarked by all, that, while Thomas Kerr prospered, Walter Horner, who was at one time much the richer man, gradually sank into the most abject circumstances, and died a pensioner on his incorporation, more despised than pitied. And thus ends our tale of Major Weir's famous night airings in Edinburgh.

THE DIVINITY STUDENT.

"So fades, so perishes, grows dim, and dies,
All that the world is proud of."

WORDSWORTH.

ALTHOUGH the revelations of a divine philosophy have taught us no more to entertain the blind notions of the Epicureans of old, that everything is the result of chance—or to agree with the Stoics, that the revolutions of the planetary system decree the fates and regulate the actions of mankind—yet the vicissitudes of human life, and the uncertainties of earthly hope, continue no less frequently to be the theme of the poet, and the regret of the philosopher. The truth is deep; nor is it ever suffered to be so long uncalled forth from our memories as to allow of its force being blunted. Striking and melancholy examples continually crowd upon us. Daily we are summoned to behold some noble aspiration blasted—to behold youth cut off in the bud—learning disappointed of its reward—worth suffering under the grip of misfortune—and industry sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind. These are dread and warning lessons to us, yet affording the surest marks of proof, that this sublunary and distempered world cannot be the final abode of man; that the seeds sown here will grow to maturity in a more genial clime; and that the events which now baffle the scrutiny of our moral reason, will yet appear to us revealed in clear and unperplexed beauty.

The story I am now about to narrate is simple in the extreme, yet affording scope for melancholy, and, it is to be hoped, not unprofitable meditation.

Robert Brown, a Scottish carrier, living in a remote district in Roxburghshire, contrived to bring up his family, consisting of five sons, by a course of unwearied industry and rigid economy, to an age at which the youngest had attained his sixteenth year—a time when it was thought by his friends that he might be able to take himself as a burthen from off his father's hands, and set about some thing towards his ultimate provision for life.

Consistently with their humble condition in the world, his brothers had all received the usual education of the Scottish peasantry—that is to say, they had been taught reading, writing, and the elements of arithmetic; and, at suitable ages, had been alternately called from school to assist in farm work. They were fortunate in obtaining employment from the neighbouring landlords; and, though the servants of different masters, none of them were above two miles distant from their father's cottage. William, the youngest, had been destined from the cradle for something superior to the rest. They looked far forward, through the vista of years, to him as the pride of their old age, and the representative who was to carry down the respectability, credit, and good name of the family, to the succeeding generation. So far from the rest being chagrined at the partiality thus openly avowed, they contributed, "each in his degree," to the furtherance of the plan chalked out by their parents; judging, with honest pride, if William was destined to move in a sphere somewhat superior to their own, that a portion of the common approbation must necessarily be reflected on themselves, his relations. Thus all were united and amiable; no selfish and grovelling feelings introduced themselves to mar the cordiality of affection, or interfere with motives so upright and so honourable.

The object of this concentrated flood of generous love was certainly not an unworthy one. Having been born some years posterior to the other members of the family,

he had never been a sharer in the youthful sports of his brothers, but was remembered by them as a favourite object on their Saturday evening meetings at their father's cottage. The frame of William was by no means so robust as that of the rest; and his dark glossy hair only set off more plainly the pale, and sometimes sallow hue of complexion. From both of these circumstances, his comparative youth, and his comparative delicacy of constitution, he ran a considerable chance of being, what is commonly termed, a spoiled child. He had, of course, contracted, from indulgence, a waywardness of disposition, which, however, by his innate modesty and good sense, was kept within very excusable limits, and soon wore entirely away, as the forwardness of boyhood began to subside into the more pensive thoughtfulness of maturer years.

After having exhausted all the means of instruction which an adjacent town supplied, he was obliged to have recourse to the grammar school of a neighbouring parish, about four miles distant from his home. For two years, neither summer's heat nor winter's snow were for a day allowed to frustrate his walking thither. He never returned till late in the afternoon; sometimes the evening star was the herald of his approach; and, during the brief days, towards the end or about the commencement of the year, darkness had set in before his face glimmered by the bickering fire of his parental hearth. Habits of temperance had been familiar to him all his days. Some cheese and oaten cake, regularly deposited in his satchel, served him for dinner, during the interval of school hours, after mid-day—and these he ate, walking about or reclining on the turf; but the warm tea and toast always awaited his evening arrival, and were set before him with all a mother's mindfulness and punctuality.

He was diligent at his books; and, being endowed by nature with good parts, he made a very fair and promising

progress. He had none of that intellectual cleverness which makes advances by sudden fits and starts, and then relapses into apathy and idleness; but his steady industry, his attention, and his assiduity, gave omens favourable to his success, while his gentle and conciliatory manners gained him not only the love of his schoolfellows, but the esteem of his instructor.

It was now evident, that, from the pains and expense taken in regard to his education, he was destined for the pulpit—that climax of the honours and distinctions ever aimed at by a poor but respectable Scottish family. Years of rigid economy had been passed, almost without affording any hope as to the ultimate success and attainment of their laudable end.

His destination, almost unknown to himself, having been thus early fixed, it was resolved that he should be sent to Edinburgh, to attend the college there, professedly as a student of divinity. The expense, resulting from this resolution, bore hard upon their slender circumstances; but they were determined still farther to exert themselves, indulging the fond hope, that, one day or other, they would reap the reward of their honourable endeavours in the prosperity of their son.

To the university he set off, amid the ill-concealed tears of some, and the open and hearty blessings of all—so much were they attached to one, who, till that day, had never been even more temporarily separated from them, without many a caution, perhaps little required, to guard against the evil contaminations of the capital—little thinking, in their simple minds, that the slender means allowed him were barely sufficient for necessary purposes, without indulging in any uncalled for luxury, and that gold is the only key that fits pleasure's casket.

He found himself seated in the Scottish metropolis, in a cheap but snug and comfortable lodging, and encompassed

by other sights and sounds than those which he had been accustomed to. The change struck on his heart with a low deep feeling of despondency, which a little time, conjoined with the urbanity and kindness of all around him, was sufficient to dissipate. The immense mass of lofty and majestic buildings, exhibiting their roofs in widening circles around him, and stretching far away, like the broken billows of an ocean, created thoughts of tumult, discord, and perplexity, when contrasted with the serene beauty of the calm pastoral district which he had left; and, amid the nightly crowd of population which engirded him, a sense of his own individual insignificance fell, with a crushing weight, on his spirit. The deeply engrafted strength of virtue and religion, however, at length prevailed, restoring to his mind its usual buoyancy; and he began to see objects in the same degree of relative value, but with a widely enlarged scope of sensation. He set about his studies with vigour and alacrity; and, keeping in recollection the circumstances of his relatives, he determined not only to avoid all unnecessary expense, but to exercise the most rigid economy. Few hours were allowed to sleep, and almost no time allotted to exercise and recreation. The hopes his father entertained he determined should not be frustrated, nor the confidence they reposed in him be shown erroneous, by any negligence on his part; while, by persevering with assiduity and ardour, he trusted, sooner than they expected, to relieve them of the burthen of his support—a burthen which, he knew, could not fail to press heavy on them all, however cheerfully supported.

In a course of the utmost economy, sobriety, and temperance, anxiously endeavouring to allow no opportunity of improvement to pass by unimproved, the winter session wore through, and left behind on his heart very few causes for self-disapprobation.

Towards the end of April, the pale student returned to

the cottage of his father. Worn out by unwearied and unremitting studies, the vernal gales of the country came like a balsam to reanimate his flagging spirits; and the hopes that the object of so much exertion and care would be ultimately crowned with success, gained a strong hold on the mind it had threatened almost to forsake. In the crowd of the city he felt too deeply his own insignificance —an isolated stranger, poor and unknown of all, striving with a feverish hope, at rewards most likely to be carried away by more powerful interests. But here he felt a grain of self-importance return to elevate his fallen thoughts. The budding hawthorn, the singing birds, and the blue sky, were all delightful; and he began to lose his own bosom fears in the general exultation of nature.

The first ebullience of parental joy at his return, together with the congratulations of his affectionate brethren, having gradually subsided, few days were indeed allowed for idle recreation; and the same industrious course was persevered in.

Of the cottage, which consisted of three apartments, one of which served for kitchen, another was entirely set apart for William, that no interruptions might at any time disturb him. In the summer mornings he was up with the lark; but he closed not his book with her evening song. His studies were carried far into the silence of the night, and the belated traveller never failed to mark the taper gleaming from the window of his apartment.

Summer mellowed into autumn, which, with its fruitage, flowers, and yellow corn fields, also passed away; and again the hoar-frost lay whitely at morning on the wall of the little garden. Towards the end of October, our student, a second time, set out on his journey to Edinburgh.

The life of a college student is not one of incident or variety. Day after day calls him to the same routine of

employment; and week is only known from week by the intervention of Sabbath repose. Suffice it, therefore, to say, that the second season passed away like the first, in frugal living and indefatigable exertion, and left our hero, at its close, the same uncorrupted, simple-hearted, and generous-minded youth, as when he first left the shadow of his father's door. His dress and his manners were very little altered. Amid the hum and the bustle of thousands, wealthy and toiling after wealth, he was an individual apart—a hermit standing on the rock, and listening to the roar of life's billowing ocean, but launching not his bark on its dim and dangerous waters.

His delicacy made him feel acutely, that the expenses which he had necessarily incurred, must weigh heavily on those upon whose open, but necessarily circumscribed bounty, he depended. It was, therefore, agreed on, at his own suggestion, to open a school for a season, in some one of the neighbouring villages. He hoped, by this means, to be enabled to raise a small fund for future exigencies, and to be indebted to his own industry for what necessity had hitherto obliged him to be dependent for on the bounty of others. Alas! this commendable design was but the protracting of a course of study already too severe for his tender and delicate constitution.

The scheme was, however, immediately acted on. A school in the village of Sauchieburn was opened, and, in a brief space, everything succeeded to the utmost of his expectations—for the school-room speedily began to fill; and, by a conscientious discharge of his duty to his pupils, the affection of their parents began to flow towards him. Although the quarterly payments were small, he contrived to lay aside by much the larger half. From the natural timidity of his disposition, conjoined with the fear of making acquaintances which might lead him into expenses, he

lived almost alone, spending the leisure of his afternoons in walking with his book in his hand through the fields; his evenings passed over in solitary study.

Not long after his settlement, Mr. Allan, a farmer of some consideration in the neighbourhood, requested him to devote an hour or two daily to the tuition of his boys. In every point of view, this was a favourable circumstance for him. His labours were handsomely remunerated; and an introduction secured for him into a well-informed and rather elegant circle.

The family in whose house he lodged were little removed above the order of peasantry, but remarkable not only for their cleanliness and for the comfort of their dwelling, but for that integrity in their small concerns, and devout feeling of religious truth, still so frequently found united to narrow circumstances in the nooks and byways of Scotland, and constituting, certainly, not the least valuable gem in the coronal of her honour. Here he was regarded with looks of love; and his minutest wants attended to, with that scrupulous zeal which can only be expected from parental tenderness. He was regarded not only as a member of the family, but looked up to as something that was above them—doing honour to their dwelling. Every possible care was taken to render his situation as agreeable as possible to him; and his health was inquired after, by the kind inmates, with the most anxious and affectionate solicitude.

But the dark work was begun within, and the canker, which was to destroy the rose of health, was already committing dreadful ravages. He uttered no complaint; and, if pain was felt, its pangs were unacknowledged. A languor of the eye, an unusual paleness of the face, and the bursting forth of large drops of perspiration on the least exertion, were the only indications of declining health. The school was attended to as usual—not an hour was

sacrificed to his weakness; and day succeeded day, and week followed week, without relaxation and without amendment. This could not last. The interregnum between receding health and approaching disease is generally of short duration, and the vacant throne is either greedily seized on by the angel or the demon.

He was getting gradually worse—gradually weaker. He had tried all those little remedies commonly prescribed for coughs, without advantage, and in secret. What was next to be done, he hardly knew. The school could no longer be continued, as he was unable to leave his room. After so much reluctant delay, a medical practitioner was consulted.

On inquiry, it was found that, for some weeks, he had been expectorating blood—he had nocturnal perspirations, hectic flushes, and almost incessant cough. His appetite was gone, and his whole frame in disorder. Poor William said, that he hoped he should soon be better, and able to persevere with his school. A week passed over, and matters were rapidly getting worse; yet it was not without reiterated persuasions, that the pale scholar could be persuaded to return for a season to the home of his fathers.

We must not omit, that, during his confinement, every attention was paid to William by the family of the Allans, and such small luxuries as his state seemed to require were sent by them unsolicited. Mr. Allan himself repeatedly called for him; and, one afternoon, as Miss Mary had walked as far as the village, she summoned up resolution to inquire at the door. William heard her voice, and requested her to come in. As he sat in a large stuffed chair, propped with pillows, his appearance evidently shocked her; and, when she wished to speak to him, her voice swelled in her throat. He extended his hand to her, and told her he would soon be better; but his

long thin fingers thrilled her to the heart by their touch. She stood for a minute beside him; and, after again shaking hands with him, departed. Her sensations, during her solitary walk home, may be more easily imagined than described.

It was noted by the servants, that Miss Mary happened to be always the first to receive the communications of the messenger sent to the village of Sauchieburn. It was also remarked that the tidings, whether favourable or otherwise, could be read in a countenance not yet hardened by artifice, as so to belie the feelings of the heart.

Home he returned at length. To paint the distress of the family, on that occasion, at such a reappearance of one whom they had loved so tenderly, for whom they had done, and were yet willing to do, so much, were a heartrending and melancholy task. As he entered the door, the mother rushed out to embrace her weak and emaciated son; and, throwing her arms around his neck, kissed his pale cheek with an agony of distress, while the tears, in spite of opposition, gushed in burning drops over her furrowed cheeks to the ground. The father grasped him by the hand, and supported him, with cheering words, into the apartment which of old he had inhabited. It had been but little used since he had last been its occupant; and the neat, clean, but plain furniture, remained almost as he had left it.

He was put to bed after the fatigue of travel, and every heart in that house was sorrowful. The poor scholar could not fail to see the distress so visible on his return; and his heart sank as the clouds of fate lowered over him. His brothers, as they dropped in, one after another, from the fields, approached affectionately to the bedside, and, taking his long, thin fingers in their toil-hardened hands, lamented his case, but cheered him with many a word of comfort, which almost belied themselves, from the uncertain

tone in which they were uttered. And no wonder, for the alteration in his appearance was dreadful; and it was evident, to the least observant glance, that the poor young man was far gone in a consumption.

For some weeks the change of air, and the sight of so many countenances, so anxiously interested in his welfare, seemed to work a favourable change; and the gloom on his spirits began gradually to subside. In the sunny forenoons, a chair was placed for him in the little garden behind the house. The spot commanded an extensive view of the country; and it amused him to look on the jolly reapers in the neighbouring field, and listen to their simple music while gathering in the yellow harvest treasures. Around him were many tall ash-trees, well remembered in the thoughts of other years. The gooseberry bushes, each of which was familiar to his memory, had shed their fruits, and were beginning to shed their leaves; but, on the later currants, some depending red and white strings were yet visible. The summer flowers were disappearing; but the more hardy roots, the spearmint, the gillyflower, the thyme, and the southernwood, sent forth to the autumnal air "a faint decaying smell." The beehive in the corner of the hedgerow was still unremoved, and the buzz of its never idle inhabitants filled the whole air with a continual pleasant murmur. The birds were all singing amid the beauty of nature, and, ever and anon, the lark, springing up on twinkling wings, sent a fainter and yet fainter note from its receding elevation.

So many agreeable images, so much affectionate attention, soothed the wounds that no earthly medicine could heal. In a short time, debility rendered him completely bed-ridden, and the tyrant of the human race betokened his approach "by many a drear foreboding sign."

It was one evening, when all the brothers had dropped

in, one after another, that symptoms of rapid dissolution showed themselves. They sat down in silence around the hearth, and looked frequently, first at William and then at each other; while, at intervals, the fortitude of manhood could not forbear a half stifled sob. They saw that the curtain of death would soon be let down over eyes so beloved; and many a hurried glance of affection—and the agitated countenance—and the quivering hand—seemed to say, in silent eloquence, "Would to God I could die in my brother's stead!"

William was not insensible to the afflicting scene around him. He told them to bear up, and assured them that he suffered neither pain of body nor mind. "Heaven is wise in all its decrees," said the dying youth; "mourn not much for me; we shall, I trust, all meet again in Heaven. I only set out on my journey a little while before you. I feel that I have been much, too much of a burden to you all"——

Here he was eagerly interrupted by all of them, who conjured him not to speak in that manner, and that it was almost unkind of him to do so.

"Well," continued William, "I feel your affection as I ought. The reward hath not perished, and shall not be taken away, though now God calls upon me to leave you."

He then requested his father to read to him the latter part of the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians, which he did with a composed and steady voice, amid the silent tears of his children, and the frequent sobs of the almost heart-broken mother, who leant with her face on the bed-clothes, holding in hers the emaciated hand of her son. The soul of a mother can only comprehend the depth and the agony of her sufferings at that hour, when called on to part with her last born—the Benjamin of her small household.

In a short time his exhaustion was so great, that his efforts to speak were unavailing, and he fell into a gentle slumber, from which he never awoke—breathing his soul out upon the silent midnight without a groan!

However much the stroke of death may be expected, it never arrives without a violent shock to the feelings of all around. Here the grief was deep, but it was not upbraiding; and every pang was tempered by the gentle consolations of Christianity.

The mournful news was communicated to the inhabitants of Sauchieburn; and, amid the regrets of many a grateful parent, bright tears fell from the eyes of childhood, at the thoughts of their kind instructor's death. For a time, with the buoyancy of feeling incident to their years, they had considered the few first day's of play as something favourable and fortunate. Feeling the pleasurable effects, they forgot the melancholy cause. But now the "hope deferred" was taken away, and nothing but uncertainty and doubt were left in its place. They looked on the shut up windows and closed door of the schoolhouse with a mingled feeling of curiosity and regret. The more affectionate said to each other, "our master shall never hear us lessons any more; they are going to lay him in the church-yard; we shall never see him again;" while the more selfish-minded busied themselves with conjectures about him who should come to them in his stead. The sorrows of childhood are of short duration; the heart is then like the softened wax, which takes all impressions—the one obliterates the other, and the last, whatever be its import, is still the deepest.

Not so evanescent was the melancholy at the house of the Allans. The two boys who had been under his charge spoke often of him as their kind master to Miss Mary, who seldom answered them but with a stifled accent, and an involuntary tear in her eye. That, almost unconsciously

to herself, some impression had been made on her heart was evident. The feelings, perhaps, were reciprocal, for William had never mentioned her but in terms of deep respect, mingled with something of tenderness and admiration; but the wide gulf that separated them prevented him from having, even for a moment, indulged one dearer hope.

Certain it is, from whatever cause it might arise, that the health of Mary Allan declined rapidly, even to a state of the utmost delicacy; and the cheerful, lively girl, could hardly be recognised in the pale, emaciated, but still beautiful features, over which the ray of pleasure now seldom shot even a transient gleam. But time, the grand physician of all human troubles, by slow, but sure degrees, began the healing of the wound so afflictingly felt by her, and by the whole cottage family. Though, after the first burst of sorrow was over, each turned to his wonted avocation, yet the mainspring of activity was felt to be broken; and the heart often refuses, for a long period, to mould itself for the reception of new feelings and altered objects. Life assumes a different aspect; and the thoughts are often tardy to accommodate themselves to change, and its inevitable concomitants.

The remaining brothers met in the cottage of their parents, as heretofore, on the Saturday evenings; and, for a long time, the blank was felt—a chair was unoccupied—a beloved face was absent; but resignation to the decrees of Providence at length triumphed over the yearnings of natural affection. The father, on whose temples the few remaining hairs were changed to white, read the portion of Scripture with accustomed gravity, from the "big ha' Bible;" and exhibited a lesson, to all around, of noble, steadfast, and unshrinking piety.

The books, the papers, and everything that had belonged to William, were preserved by his relations with an affec-

tionate regard, amounting almost to veneration; and, in a short time, a plain tombstone was erected at the head of the turf under which his ashes lay, inscribed simply with his name and age.

As the church was at more than two miles' distance from the cottage, the family usually spent the intervals between the forenoon and afternoon services, in loitering about the burial-ground. Around the grave of William, often were the whole remaining family observed, seated in the sunshine, upon the daisied turf, with their open Bibles in their hands.

The health of Miss Allan gradually recovered its former tone; but the shock she had sustained threw a shadow of change over her whole character. A degree of thoughtfulness and pensive grace hung around her looks and motions, softening down sorrow to resignation, and gaiety to cheerfulness. She grew more passionately fond of the beauties of external nature, and enjoyed a serene pleasure in solitary walks. Sometimes, in the light of the setting sun, when an azure shadow hung over the hills, when the clouds were tipped with refulgent glory, and the note of the blackbird, "most musical, most melancholy," burst on the ear from the neighbouring coppice, the eye of the passenger has, unawares, intruded on the privacy of her grief, as she stood silently gazing on the grave of him who had gone up before her into heaven.

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WILSON'S

TALES OF THE BORDERS,

AND OF SCOTLAND.

THE GUIDWIFE OF COLDINGHAM;

OR,

THE SURPRISE OF FAST CASTLE.

NEAR where St. Abb stretches, in massive strength, into the sea, still terrible, even in ruins, may be seen the remains of Fast Castle, one of the most interesting in its history—as it is the most fearfully romantic in its situation—of all the mouldering strongholds which are still to be traced among the Borders, like monuments of war, crumbling into nothingness beneath the silent but destroying touch of time. After the death of the bluff Harry the Eighth of England, who had long kept many of the corruptible amongst the Scottish nobility and gentry in his pay, the ambitious Somerset, succeeding to the office of guardian of the young king, speedily, under the name of Protector, acquired an authority nothing inferior to the power of an absolute monarch. He had not long held the reins of government when he rendered it evident, that it was a part of his ambition to subdue Scotland, or the better portion of it, into a mere province of England.

The then governor of Scotland, Hamilton, Earl of Arran,

(for Queen Mary was but a child,) was not ignorant of the designs of Somerset, and every preparation was made to repel him on his crossing the Borders. It was drawing towards evening on the first of September, 1547, when the Protector, at the head of an army of eighteen thousand men, arrived at Berwick; and nearly at the same instant, while the gloaming yet lay light and thin upon the sea, a fleet, consisting of thirty-four vessels of war, thirty transports, and a galley, were observed sailing round Emmanuel's head—the most eastern point of Holy Island. On the moment that the fleet was perceived, St. Abb's lighted up its fires, throwing a long line of light along the darkening sea, from the black shore to the far horizon: and scarce had the first flame of its alarm-fire waved in the wind, till the Dow Hill repeated the fiery signal; and, in a few minutes, Domilaw, Dumprender, and Arthur's Seat, exhibited tops of fire as the night fell down on them, bearing the tidings, as if lightnings flying on different courses revealed them, through Berwickshire and the Lothians, and enabling Roxburgshire and Fife to read the tale; while Binning's Craig, repeating the telegraphic fire, startled the burghers of Linlithgow on the one hand, and on the other aroused the men of Lanarkshire.

Before, therefore, the vessels had arrived in the bay, or the Protector's army had encamped in the Magdalen Fields around Berwick—Berwickshire, Roxburgh, the Lothians, Fife, and Lanark were in arms. The cry from the hills and in the glens was, "The enemy is come—the English—to arms!" The shepherd drove his flocks to the inaccessible places in the mountains; he threw down his crook and grasped his spear.

At the same time that Somerset crossed the Borders on the east, the Earl of Lennox, who, from disappointed ambition, had proved false to his country, entered it at the head of another English army to the west.

But I mean not to write a history of Somerset's invasion —of the plausible proposals which he made, and which were rejected—nor of the advantages which the Scots, through recklessness or want of discipline, flung away, and of the disasters which followed. All the places of strength upon the Borders fell into his hands, and he garrisoned them from his army and set governors over them. The first place of his attack was Fast Castle; in which, after taking possession of it, he left a governor and strong garrison, composed of English troops and foreign mercenaries, causing also the people around, for their own safety, to take to him an oath of fealty, renouncing their allegiance to the young queen. But while there were many who obeyed his command with reluctance, there were others who chose rather to endanger or forfeit their lives and property than comply with it. It had not, however, been two years in the hands of the English, when, by a daring and desperate act of courage, it was wrested from them.

A decree went forth from the English governor of the castle, commanding them to bring into it, from time to time, all necessary provisions for the use of the garrison, for which they should receive broad money in return; for Somerset and his chief officers—the Lord Grey and others —had caused it to be published, that they considered the inhabitants of that part of Scotland as the subjects of young Edward, in common with themselves, and not as a people with whom they were at war, or from whom their soldiers might collect provisions and pay them with the sword.

The English, indeed, paid liberally for whatsoever they received; and there was policy in their so doing, for there were not a few who preferred lucre to their country, and the effigy of a prince upon a coin to allegiance to their lawful monarch. But, while such obeyed with alacrity the command of the governor of Fast Castle, to bring

provisions to his garrison, there were many others who acquiesced in it reluctantly, and only obeyed from the consciousness that disobedience would be the price of their lives.

At this period there dwelt in Coldingham a widow, named Madge Gordon. She was a tall and powerful woman, and her years might be a little below fifty. Daily she indulged in invectives against the English, and spoke contemptuously of the spirit of her countrymen in submitting to the mandate of the governor of Fast Castle. She had two cows and more than a score of poultry; but she declared that she would spill the milk of the one upon the ground every day, and throw the eggs of the other over the cliffs, rather than that either the one or the other should be taken through the gates of the castle while an English garrison held it.

Often, therefore, as Madge beheld her neighbours carrying their baskets on their arms, their creels or sacks upon their backs, or driving their horses, laden with provisions, towards the castle, her wrath would rise against them, and she was wont to exclaim—

"O ye slaves!—ye base loun-hearted beasts o' burden! hoo lang will ye boo before the hand that strikes ye, or kiss the foot that tramples on ye? Throw doun the provisions, and gang hame and bring what they better deserve; for, if ye will gie them bread, feed them on the point o' yer faithers' spears."

Some laughed as Madge spoke; but her words sank deep into the hearts of others; and a few answered—

"Ye are as daft as ever, Madge; but a haveral woman's tongue is nae scandal, and ye ken that the governor winna tak cognizance o' ye."

"Me ken or care for him, ye spiritless coofs, ye!" she replied; "gae tell him that Madge Gordon defies him and a' his men, as she despisesyou, and wad shake the dirt frae

her shoon at baith the ane and the other o' ye. Shame fa' ye, ye degenerate, mongrel race! for, if ye had ae drap o' the bluid o' the men in yer veins wha bled wi' Wallace and wi' Bruce, before the sun gaed doun, the flag o' bonny Scotland wad wave frae the castle towers."

"Mother! mother!" said an interesting-looking girl of nineteen, who had come to the door as the voice of Madge waxed louder and more bitter—"dinna talk foolishly—ye will bring us a' into trouble."

"Trouble! ye silly lassie, ye!" rejoined Madge; "these are times indeed to talk o' the like o' us being brought into trouble, when our puir bluiding country is groaning beneath the yoke o' an enemy, and we see them harrying us not only oot o' hoose and ha', but even those that should be our protectors oot o' their manhood! See," added she, "do ye see wha yon is, skulking as far as he can get frae our door wi' the weel-filled sack upon his shouthers? It is yer ain dearie, Florence Wilson! O the betrayer o' his country!—He's a coward, Janet, like the rest o' them, and shall ne'er ca' ye his wife while I live to ca' ye daughter."

"O mother!" added the maiden, in a low and agitated voice—"what could poor Florence do? It isna wi' a man body as it is wi' the like o' us. If he didna do as the lave do, he wad be informed against, and he maun obey or die!"

"Let him die, then, as a man, as a Scotchman!" said the stern guidwife of Coldingham.

Florence Wilson, of whom Madge had spoken, was a young man of three or four and twenty, and who then held, as his fathers had done before him, sheep lands under the house of Home. He was one of those who obeyed reluctantly the command of the governor to bring provisions to the garrison; and, until the day on which Madge beheld him with the sack upon his shoulders, he had resisted doing so. But traitors had whispered the tale of his stubbornness and discontent in the castle; and, in order to save

himself and his flocks, he that day took a part of his substance to the garrison. He had long been the accepted of Janet Gordon; and the troubles of the times alone prevented them, as the phrase went, from "commencing house together." He well knew the fierce and daring patriotism of his intended mother-in-law, and he took a circuitous route, in order to avoid passing her door, laden with a burden of provisions for the enemy. But, as has been told, she perceived him.

In the evening, Florence paid his nightly visit to Janet.

"Out! out! ye traitor!" cried Madge, as she beheld him crossing her threshold; "the shadow of a coward shall ne'er fall on my floor while I hae a hand to prevent it."

"I'm nae coward, guidwife," retorted Florence indignantly.

"Nae coward!" she rejoined; "what are ye, then? Did not I, this very day, wi' my ain een, behold ye skulking, and carrying provisions to the enemy!"

"Ye might," said Florence; "but ae man canna tak a castle, nor drive frae it five hundred enemies. Bide ye yet. Foolhardy courage isna manhood; and, had mair prudence and caution, and less confidence, been exercised by our army last year, we wouldna hae this day to mourn owre the battle o' Pinkie. I tell ye, therefore, again, just bide ye yet."

"Come in, Florence," said Madge; "draw in a seat and sit doun, and tell me what ye mean."

"Hoots, Florence," said Janet, in a tone partaking of reproach and alarm, "are ye gaun to be as daft as my mother? What matters it to us wha's king or wha's queen? —it will be lang or either the ane or the ither o' them do onything for us. When ye see lords and gentry in the pay o' England, and takin its part, what can the like o' you or my mother do?"

"Do! ye chicken-hearted trembler at yer ain shadow!"

interrupted Madge; "though somewhat past its best, I hae an arm as strong and healthy as the best o' them, and the blood that runs in it is as guid as the proudest o' them."

Now, the maiden name of Madge was Home; and when her pride was touched, it was her habit to run over the genealogical tree of her father's family, which she could illustrate upon her fingers, beginning on all occasions—"I am, and so is every Home in Berwickshire, descended frae the Saxon kings o' England and the first Earls o' Northumberland." Thus did she run on, tracing their descent from Crinan, chief of the Saxons in the north of England, to Maldredus, his son, who married Algatha, daughter of Uthred, prince of Northumberland, and granddaughter of Ethelrid, king of England; and from Maldredus to his son Cospatrick, of whose power William the Conqueror became jealous, and who was, therefore, forced to fly into Scotland in the year 1071, where Malcolm Canmore bestowed on him the manor of Dunbar, and many baronies in Berwickshire. Thus did she notice three other Cospatricks, famous and mighty men in their day, each succeeding Cospatrick the son of his predecessor; and after them a Waldreve, and a Patrick, whose son, William, marrying his cousin, he obtained with her the lands of Home, and, assuming the name, they became the founders of the clan. From the offspring of the cousin, the male of whom took the name of Sir William Home, and from him through eleven other successors, down to George, the fourth Lord Home, who had fallen while repelling the invasion of Somerset a few months before, did Madge trace the roots, shoots, and branches of her family, carrying it back through a period of more than six hundred years; and she glowed, therefore, with true aristocratic indignation at the remark of her daughter to Florence—"What can the like o' you or my mother do?" And she concluded her description of

her genealogical tree by saying—"Talk noo the like o' yer mother, hizzy!"

"Aweel, mother," said Janet, mildly—"that may a' be; but there is nae cause for you fleeing into a tift upon the matter, for nae harm was meant. I only dinna wish Florence to be putting his life in jeopardy for neither end nor purpose. I'm sure I wish that oor nobility would keep to their bargain, and allow the queen, though she is but a lassie yet, to be married to young king Edward, and then we might hae peace in the land, and ither folk would be married as weel as them."

"We shall be married, Janet, my doo," said Florence, gazing on her tenderly—"only ye bide a wee."

Now, it must not be thought that Janet loved her country less than did her mother or her betrothed husband; but, while the land of blue mountains was dear to her heart, Florence Wilson was yet more dear; and it was only because they were associated with thoughts of him that they became as a living thing, as a voice and as music in her bosom. For, whence comes our fondness for the woods, the mountains, the rivers of nativity, but from the fond remembrances which their associations conjure up, and the visions which they recall to the memory of those who were dear to us, but who are now far from us, or with the dead? We may have seen more stupendous mountains, nobler rivers, and more stately woods—but they were not *ours!* They were not the mountains, the rivers, and the woods, by which we played in childhood, formed first friendships, or breathed love's tender tale in the ear of her who was beautiful as the young moon or the evening star, which hung over us like smiles of heaven; nor were they the mountains, the woods, and the rivers, near which our kindred, the flesh of our flesh, and the bone of our bone, SLEEP! But I digress.

"Tell me, Florence," said Madge, "what mean ye by

'bide a wee?' Is there a concerted project amongst ony o' ye, an' are ye waiting for an opportunity to carry it into effect?"

"No," answered he, "I canna say as how we hae devised ony practicable scheme o' owrecoming our oppressors as yet; but there are hundreds o' us ready to draw our swords an' strike, on the slightest chance o' success offering—and the chance may come."

"An' amongst the hundreds o' hands ye speak o'," returned Madge, "is there no a single head that can plot an' devise a plan to owrecome an' drive our persecutors frae the castle?"

"I doot it—at least I hae ne'er heard ony feasible-like plan proposed," said Florence, sorrowfully.

Madge sat thoughtful for a few minutes, her chin resting on her hand. At length she inquired—"When go ye back to sell provisions to them again?"

"This day week," was the reply.

"Then I shall tak my basket wi' eggs an' butter, an' gae wi' ye," answered Madge.

"O mother! what are ye sayin?" cried Janet. "Ye maun gang nae sic gate. I ken yer temper would flare up the moment ye heard a word spoken against Scotland, or a jibe broken on it; an' there is nae tellin' what might be the consequence."

"Leave baith the action an' the consequence to me, Janet, my woman," said the patriotic mother; "as I brew, I will drink. But ye hae naething to fear; I will be as mim in the castle as ye wad be if gieing Florence yer hand in the kirk."

The day on which the people were again to carry provisions to the garrison in Fast Castle arrived; and to the surprize of every one, Madge, with a laden basket on each arm, mingled amongst them. Many marvelled, and the more mercenary said—

"Ay, ay!—Madge likes to turn the penny as weel as ither folk. The English will hae guid luck if ony o' them get a bargain oot o' her baskets."

She, therefore, went to the castle, bearing provisions with the rest of the peasantry; but, under pretence of disposing of her goods to the best advantage, she went through and around the castle, and quitted it not until she had ascertained where were its strongest, where its weakest points of defence, and in what manner it was guarded.

When, therefore, Florence Wilson again visited her dwelling, she addressed him, saying—

"Noo, I hae seen oor enemies i' the heart o' their strength; an' I hae a word to say to ye that will try yer courage, and the courage o' the hunders o' guid men an' true that ye hae spoken o' as only bidin' their time to strike. Noo, is it yer opinion that, between Dunglass an' Eyemouth, ye could gather a hundred men willing an' ready to draw the sword for Scotland's right, an' to drive the invaders frae Fast Castle, if a feasible plan were laid before them?"

"I hae nae doot o't," replied he.

"Doots winna do," said she; "will ye try it?"

"Yes," said he.

"Florence, ye *shall* be my son," added she, taking his hand—"I see there is spirit in ye yet."

"Mother," said Janet earnestly, "what dangerous errand is this ye wad set him upon?—what do ye think it could matter to me wha was governor o' Fast Castle, if Florence should meet his death in the attempt?"

"Wheesht! ye silly lassie, ye," replied her mother; "had I no borne ye, I wad hae said that ye hadna a drap o' my bluid i' yer veins. What is't that ye fear? If they'll abide by my counsel, though it may try their courage, oor purpose shall be accomplished wi' but little scaith."

"Neither fret nor fear, dear," said Florence, addressing Janet; "I hae a hand to defend my head, an' a guid sword to guard baith." Then turning to her mother, he added—"An' what may be yer plan, that I may communicate it to them that I ken to be zealous in oor country's cause?"

"Were I to tell ye noo," said she, "that ye might communicate it to them, before we were ready to put it into execution, the story wad spread frae the Tweed to John o' Groat's, and frae St. Abb's to the Solway, and our designs be prevented. Na, lad, my scheme maun be laid before a the true men that can be gathered together at the same moment, an' within a few hours o' its being put in execution. Do ye ken the dark copse aboon Houndwood, where there is a narrow and crooked opening through the tangled trees, but leading to a bit o' bonny green sward, where a thousand men might encamp unobserved?"

"I do," answered Florence.

"And think ye that ye could assemble the hundred men ye speak o' there, on this night fortnight?"

"I will try," replied he.

"Try, then," added she, "and I will meet ye there before the new moon sink behind the Lammermoors."

It was a few days after this that Madge was summoned to the village of Home, to attend the funeral of a relative; and while she was yet there, the castle of her ancestors was daringly wrested from the hands of the Protector's troops, by an aged kinsman of her own, and a handful of armed men. The gallant deed fired her zeal more keenly, and strengthened her resolution to wrest Fast Castle from the hands of the invaders. She had been detained at Home until the day on which Florence Wilson was to assemble the stout-hearted and trust-worthy in the copse above Houndwood. Her kindred would have detained her longer; but she resisted their entreaties, and took leave of them

saying, that "her bit lassie, Janet, would be growing irksome wi' being left alane, an' that, at ony rate, she had business on hand that couldna be delayed."

She proceeded direct to the place of rendezvous, without going onwards to her own house; and, as she drew near the narrow opening which led to the green space in the centre of the dark copse, the young moon was sinking behind the hills. As she drew cautiously forward she heard the sound of voices, which gradually became audible.

"Well, Florence," said one, "what are ye waiting for? Where is the grand project that ye was to lay before us?"

"Florence," said others, "let us proceed to business. It is gaun to be very dark, and ye will remember we have to gang as far as the Peaths* the night yet."

Florence answered as one perplexed, but in his wonted words—"Hae patience—bide a wee;" and added, in a sort of soliloquy, but loud enough to be overheard by his companions—"She promised to be here before the moon gaed down upon the Lammermoors."

"Wha did?—wha promised to be here?" inquired half a dozen voices.

"I did!" cried Madge, proudly, as she issued from the narrow aperture in the copse, and her tall figure was revealed by the fading moonbeams. With a stately step, she walked into the midst of them, and gazed round as though the blood and dignity of all the Homes had been centred in her own person.

"Weel, Madge," inquired they, "and, since ye are come, for what hae ye brought us here?"

"To try," added she, "whether, inheriting, as ye do, yer faithers' bluid, ye also inherit their spirit—to see whether ye hae the manhood to break the yoke o' yer oppressors, or if ye hae the courage to follow the example which the men o' Home set ye the other nicht."

* The Pease Bridge.

"What have they done?" inquired Florence.

"Hearken," said she, "ane and a' o' ye, and I will tell ye; for, wi' my ain een, I beheld a sicht that was as joyfu' to me as the sight o' a sealed pardon to a condemned criminal. Ye weel ken that, for near twa years, the English have held Home Castle, just as they still hold Fast Castle, beside us. Now, it was the other nicht, and just as the grey gloam was darkening the towers, that an auld kinsman o' mine, o' the name o' Home, scaled the walls where they were highest, strongest, and least guarded; thirty gallant countrymen had accompanied him to their foot, but before they could follow his example, he was perceived by a sentinel, wha shouted out—'To arms!—to arms!' 'Cower, lads, cower!' said my auld kinsman, in a sort o' half whisper, to his followers; and he again descended the wall, and they lay down, with their swords in their hands, behind some whin bushes at the foot o' the battlements. There was running, clanking, and shouting through the castle for a time; but, as naething like the presence o' an enemy was either seen or heard, the sentry that had raised the alarm was laughed at, and some gaed back to their beds, and others to their wine. But, after about two hours, and when a'thing was again quiet, my kinsman and his followers climbed the walls, and, rushing frae sentinel to sentinel, they owrecam ane after anither before they could gie the alarm to the garrison in the castle; and, bursting into it, shouted—'Hurra!—Scotland and Home for ever!' Panic seized the garrison; some started frae their sleep—others reeled frae their cups—some grasped their arms—others ran, they knew not where—but terror struck the hearts o' ane and a'; and still, as the cry, 'Scotland and Home for ever!' rang frae room to room, and was echoed through the lang high galleries, it seemed like the shouting o' a thousand men; and, within ten minutes, every man in the garrison was made prisoner or put to the sword! And

noo, neebors, what my kinsman and a handfu' o' countrymen did for the deliverance o' the Castle o' Home, can ye not do for Fast Castle, or will ye not—and so drive every invader oot o' Berwickshire?"

"I dinna mean to say, Madge," answered one, who appeared to be the most influential personage amongst her auditors—"I dinna mean to say but that your relation and his comrades hae performed a most noble and gallant exploit—one that renders them worthy o' being held in everlasting remembrance by their countrymen—and glad would I be if we could this night do the same for Fast Castle. But, woman, the thing is impossible; the cases are not parallel. It mightna be a difficult matter to scale the highest part o' the walls o' Home Castle, and ladders could easily be got for that purpose; but, at Fast Castle, wi' the draw-brig up, and the dark, deep, terrible chasm between you and the walls, like the bottomless gulf between time and eternity!—I say, again, for my part, the thing is impossible. Wha has strength o' head, even for a moment, to look doun frae the dark and dizzy height o' the Wolf's Crag?—and wha could think o' scaling it? Even if it had been possible, the stoutest heart that ever beat in a bosom would, wi' the sickening horror o' its owner's situation, before he was half-way up, be dead as the rocks that would dash him to pieces as he fell! Na, na, I should hae been glad to lend a helping and a willing hand to ony practicable plan, but it would be madness to throw away our lives where there couldna be the slightest possibility o' success."

"Listen," said Madge; "I ken what is possible, and what is impossible, as weel as ony o' ye. I meant that ye should tak for example the dauntless spirit o' my kinsman and the men o' Home, and no their manner o' entering the castle. But, if yer hearts beat as their hearts did, before this hour the morn's nicht, the invaders will be driven frae

Fast Castle. In the morning we are ordered to take provisions to the garrison. I shall be wi' ye, and in the front o' ye. But, though my left arm carries a basket, beneath my cloak shall be hidden the bit sword which my guidman wore in the wars against King Harry; and, as I reach the last sentinel—'Now, lads! now for Scotland and our Queen!' I shall cry; and wha dare follow my example?"

"I dare! I will!" said Florence Wilson, "and be at yer side to strike doun the sentinel; and sure am I that there isna a man here that winna do or die, and drive oor enemies frae the castle, or leave his body within its wa's for them to cast into the sea. Every man o' us, the morn, will enter the castle wi' arms concealed about him, and hae them ready to draw and strike at a moment's warning. Ye canny say, freends, but that this is a feasible plan, and ye winna be outdone in bravery by a woman. Do ye agree to it?"

There were cries of—"Yes, Florence, yes!—every man o' us!"—and "It is an excellent plan—it is only a pity that it hadna been thocht o' suner," resounded on all sides; but "Better late than never," said others.

"Come round me, then," said Madge; and they formed a circle around her. "Ye swear now," she continued, "in the presence o' Him who see'th through the darkness o' night and searcheth the heart, that nane o' ye will betray to oor enemies what we hae this nicht determined on; but that every man o' ye will, the morn, though at the price o' his life, do yer utmost to deliver oor groaning country frae the yoke o' its invaders and oppressors! This ye swear?"

And they bowed their heads around her.

"Awa, then," added she, "ilka man to his ain hoose, and get his weapons in readiness." And, leaving the copse, they proceeded in various directions across the desolate

moor. But Florence Wilson accompanied Madge to her dwelling; and, as they went, she said—

"Florence, if ye act as weel the morn as ye hae spoken this nicht, the morn shall my dochter, Janet, be yer wife, wi' a fu' purse for her portion that neither o' ye kens aboot."

He pressed her hand in the fulness of his heart; but she added—

"Na, na, Florence, I'm no a person that cares aboot a fuss being made for the sake o' gratitude—thank me wi' deeds. Remember I have said—a' depends on yer conduct the morn."

When they entered the house, poor Janet was weeping, because of her mother's absence, for she had expected her for two days; and her apprehensions were not removed when she saw her in the company of Florence, who, although her destined husband, and who, though he had long been in the habit of visiting her daily, had called but once during her mother's absence, and then he was sad and spoke little. She saw that her parent had prevailed on him to undertake some desperate project, and she wept for his sake.

When he arose to depart, she rose also and accompanied him to the door.

"Florence," said she, tenderly, "you and my mother hae some secret between ye, which ye winna communicate to me."

"A' that is a secret between us, said he, "is, that she consents that the morn ye shall be my winsome bride, if ye be willing, as I'm sure ye are; and that is nae secret that I wad keep frae ye; but I didna wish to put ye aboot by mentioning it before her."

Janet blushed, and again added—

"But there is something mair between ye than that, Florence, and why should ye hide it frae me?"

"Dear me, hinny!" said he, "I wonder that ye should be sae apprehensive. There is nae secret between yer mother an' me that isna weel-kenned to every ane in the country-side. But just ye hae patience—bide a wee—wait only till the morn; and, when I come to lead ye afore the minister, I'll tell ye a'thing then."

"An' wherefore no tell me the noo, Florence?" said she. "I am sure that there is something brewing, an' a dangerous something too. Daur ye no trust me? Ye may think me a weak an' silly creature; but, if I am not just so rash and outspoken as my mother, try me if I haena as stout a heart when there is a necessity for showing it."

"Weel, Janet, dear," said Florence, "I winna conceal frae ye that there is something brewing—but what that something is I am not at liberty to tell. I am bound by an oath not to speak o't, and so are a hunder others, as weel as me. But the morn it will be in my power to tell ye a'. Noo, just be ye contented, and get ready for our wedding."

"And my mother kens," Janet was proceeding to say, when her mother's voice was heard, crying from the house—

"Come in, Janet—what are ye doing oot there in the cauld?—ye hae been lang enough wi' Florence the nicht—but the morn's nicht ye may speak to him as lang as ye like. Sae come in, lassie."

As the reader may suppose, Madge was not one whose commands required to be uttered twice; and, with a troubled heart, Janet bade Florence "good-night," and returned to the cottage.

It was a little after sunrise on the following day, when a body of more than a hundred peasantry, agreeably to the command of the governor, appeared before the castle, laden with provisions. Some of them had the stores which they had brought upon the backs of horses, but which they

placed upon their own shoulders as they approached the bridge. Amongst them were fishermen from Eyemouth and Coldingham, shepherds from the hills with slaughtered sheep, millers, and the cultivators of the patches of arable ground beyond the moor. With them, also, were a few women carrying eggs, butter, cheese, and poultry; and at the head of the procession (for the narrowness of the drawbridge over the frightful chasm, beyond which the castle stood, caused the company to assume the form of a procession as they entered the walls) was Madge Gordon, and her intended son-in-law, Florence Wilson.

The drawbridge had been let down to them; the last of the burden-bearers had crossed it; and Madge had reached the farthest sentinel, when suddenly dropping her basket, out from beneath her grey cloak gleamed the sword of her dead husband!

"Now, lads!—now for Scotland and our Queen!" she exclaimed, and as she spoke, the sword in her hand pierced the body of the sentinel. At the same instant every man cast his burden to the ground, a hundred hidden swords were revealed, and every sentinel was overpowered.

"Forward, lads! forward!" shouted Madge.

"Forward!" cried Florence Wilson, with his sword in his hand, leading the way. They rushed into the interior of the castle; they divided into bands. Some placed themselves before the arsenal where arms were kept, while others rushed from room to room, making prisoners of those of the garrison who yielded willingly, and showing no quarter to those who resisted. Many sought safety in flight, some flying half-naked, aroused from morning dreams after a night's carouse, and almost all fled without weapons of defence. The effect upon the garrison was as if a thunderbolt had burst in the midst of them. Within half an hour, Fast Castle was in the hands of the peasantry, and

the entire soldiery who had defended it had either fled, were slain, or made prisoners.

Besides striking the first blow, Madge had not permitted the sword of her late husband to remain idle in her hands during the conflict. And, as the conquerors gathered round Florence Wilson, to acknowledge to him that to his counsel, presence of mind, and courage, as their leader, in the midst of the confusion that prevailed, they owed their victory, and the deliverance of the east of Berwickshire from its invaders, Madge pressed forward, and, presenting him her husband's sword, said—

"Tak this, my son, and keep it—it was the sword o' a brave man, and to a brave man I gie it—and this night shall ye be my son indeed."

"Thank ye, mother——mother!" said Florence. And as he spoke a faint smile crossed his features.

But scarce had he taken the sword in his hand, ere a voice was heard, crying—

"Where is he?—where shall I find him?—does he live?—where is my mother?"

"Here, love!—here! It is my Janet!" cried Florence; but his voice seemed to fail him as he spoke.

"Come here, my bairn," cried her mother, "and in the presence of these witnesses receive a hand that ye may be proud o'."

As part of the garrison fled through Coldingham, Janet had heard of the surprise by which the castle had been taken, and ran towards it to gather tidings of her mother and affianced husband; for she now knew the secret which they would not reveal to her.

As she rushed forward, the crowd that surrounded Florence gave way, and, as he moved forward to meet her, it was observed that he shook or staggered as he went; but it was thought no more of; and when she fell upon his bosom, and her mother took their hands and pressed

them together, the multitude burst into a shout and blessed them. He strove to speak—he muttered the word "Janet!" but his arms fell from her neck, and he sank as lifeless on the ground.

"Florence! my Florence!—he is wounded—murdered!" cried the maiden, and she flung herself beside him on the ground.

Madge and the spectators endeavoured to raise him; but his eyes were closed; and, as he gasped, they with difficulty could understand the words he strove to utter—"Water—water!"

He had, indeed, been wounded—mortally wounded—but he spoke not of it. They raised him in their arms and carried him to an apartment in the castle; but, ere they reached it, the spirit of Florence Wilson had fled.

Poor Janet clung to his lifeless body. She now cried—"Florence!—Florence!—we shall be married to-night?—yes!—yes!—I have everything ready!" And again she spoke bitter words to her mother, and said that she had murdered her Florence. The spectators lifted her from his body, and Madge stood as one on whom affliction, in the midst of her triumph, had fallen as a palsy, depriving her of speech and action.

"My poor bereaved bairn!" she at length exclaimed; and she took her daughter in her arms and kissed her—"ye hae indeed cause to mourn, for Florence was a noble lad!—but, oh, dinna say it was my doing, hinny!—dinna wyte yer mother!—will ye no, Janet? It is a great comfort that Florence has died like a hero."

But Janet never was herself again. She became, as their neighbours said, a poor, melancholy, maundering creature, going about talking of her Florence and the surprise of Fast Castle, and ever ending her story—"But I maun awa hame and get ready, for Florence and I are to be married the night."

Madge followed her, mourning, wheresoever she went, bearing with and soothing all her humours. But she had not long to bear them; for, within two years, Janet was laid by the side of Florence Wilson, in Coldingham kirk-yard; and, before another winter howled over their peaceful graves, Madge lay at rest beside them.

THE SURGEON'S TALES.

THE SOMNAMBULIST OF REDCLEUGH.

It is now many years since I visited a patient, at the distance of some sixty miles from the proper circuit of my practice. On one occasion, when with him, I received a letter from a gentleman, who subscribed himself as one of the trustees of Mr. Bernard* of Redcleugh, requesting me to visit, on my return home, the widow of that gentleman, who still resided in the old mansion, and whose mind had received a shock from some domestic affliction, any allusion to which was, for some reason, very specially reserved. I may remark, that I believe I owed this application to some opinions I was known to entertain on the subject of that species of insanity produced by moral causes, and which is to be carefully distinguished from the diathetic mania, so often accompanied by pathological changes in the brain. It is scarcely necessary to inform the reader, that we have always a better chance for a cure in the one case than in the other, insomuch indeed as, in the first, we have merely functional derangement; in the second, organic change. I always maintain there is no interest about insane people, except to the man of science; and even he very soon gets to that "ass's bridge," on the other side of which Nature, as the genius of occult things, stands with a satirical smile on her face, as she sees the proud savans toppling over into the Lethe of sheer ignorance, and getting drowned for their insane curiosity. In the asylum in France, mentioned by

* I find it more convenient, in this tale, to give names to my personages, in place of initials.

De Vayer, the inmates enjoyed exceedingly the imputed madness of the visiting physician. The same play is acted in the world all throughout. Our insanity has only a little more method in it—and while I avoid any description of the madness of Mrs. Bernard, I will have to set forth a story, which, leading to that madness, has in it apparently as much of insanity as may be found in the ravings of a maniac.

I obeyed the call to Redcleugh, where I found the *res domi* in a peculiar position. There were few inmates in the large old house. Besides the invalid herself, there was an old cook and a butler, by name Francis, who had been in the family for many years, and whose garrulity was supplied from an inexhaustible fountain—the fate and fortunes of the Bernards. My patient was a lovely woman in body—a maniac in mind. Her affliction had suddenly shot up into her brain, and left untouched the lineaments of her beauty, excepting the expression of the eye, which had become nervous and furtive, oscillating between the extreme of softness and the intensity of ferocity. Having been cautioned by Francis to make no allusion to her husband or to certain children, whom he named, or to the word "book," and many other things, I contented myself, in the first instance, with a general examination of her symptoms; and, as it was late before I arrived, I resolved upon remaining all night, which would enable me to see her again in the morning. I had supper served up to me by Francis, who brought me some wine which had been in the house for fifty years, and told me stories of the family, extending back twice that period. Sometimes these old legends would be interrupted for a moment by a shrill cry, coming from a source which we both knew. All else in this house was under the spell of Angerana, the genius of silence. There is something peculiar in the sound of a common voice in a large house, filled with memorials of

those who had lived in it, and yet with no living sounds to break the dull heavy air, which seems to thicken by not being moved. It appeared as if I had been suddenly thrown into a region of romance, but my experiences were not pleasant. I wished to escape to my own professional thoughts again, and desired to go to bed.

I was accordingly, not without some efforts on the part of my entertainer to prolong his stories, ushered into my bed-room—a large apartment, hung with pictures, some very old, and some very new. Francis put the candle down, and left me. It was not long before I was undressed and under the bed-clothes; but not being sure about sleeping, I left the candle burning, intending to rise and extinguish it when I found myself more inclined to fall over into the rest I required. The old legends began to pass through my mind, and I was engrossed with the spirit of the past. Time makes poetry out of very common things, and then we are to remember, what we do not often think of, that the most ordinary life cannot be passed without encountering some incidents which smack of the romantic. Nay, every man's life, as a bright gleam thrown on the dark abyss which separates him from eternity, is all through a romance, in the midst of that greater one, seen by us only as shadows—the negatives of some positives, perhaps, witnessed by eyes on the other side. I have always been tinged by something of the spirit of old Bruno, that dreamer, whose most real realities were no other than umbery forms—flakes of shadow—cast off by a central light from the real objects, of which we are the mere shadowy representatives. All the breathing, throbbing, active beings, who for two hundred years had run along these narrow passages of the old house, and peered into half-open doors, or out of the small skew-topped windows —danced, sang, laughed and wept—died, and been carried out—were to each other as such umbery things; and I,

the present subsisting shadow, received them all into my living microcosm, where, as in a mirror, they existed again, scarcely less shadowy than before.

Somehow or another I could not get to sleep; not that I had any fears: these were out of the question with me. My vigils were attributable to a fancy, wrought upon by the recitals of the old butler, illustrated by the very concrete things which had been used by the personages he described. There were the chairs they sat on, the beds they slept on, the piano they played on, all as they had been left. It was impossible for me to conceive that there was yet no connection between these things and the old family. The pictures, too, were still there, in the various rooms, some of them in my bed room. The light of my eyes seemed to have disenchanted these silent staring personages. They came forth and occupied themselves as they had been wont before they became pictures. The chair of the first of the late Mr. Bernard's two wives—that "angel whose look was an eternal smile," as Francis poetically described her—appeared to have the power of drawing her down into it; but then the attraction was not less for the second wife, "whose fate was a terrible mystery;" and thus would I get confused. Then, to which of these did the little dark fellow on the south wall belong—he who seemed to have been scorched by too strong a sun—and the girl beside them, who looked as if she had been blanched by too bright a moon—which of the two was her mother?

At last I got out of bed, and rummaged for some stray volume to disenchant me out of the imaginary world of these Bernards. I drew out one or two drawers, which had been so long shut that they had lost their allegiance to the hand. I peered into an escritoire, and another old cabinet, which creaked and groaned at being disturbed by a hand not a Bernard's. All was empty. There was one

drawer which refused to come out to the full extent. Something seemed to be jammed between it and the back of the escritoire. Man is an enterprising animal; a little resistance sets his energies a-spring. I would not be baulked. I would know what the impediment was and work out the solution of the difficulty. By pulling hard the obstacle gave way. The drawer followed my hand, while my body fell back on the floor. Psha! some stray leaves of an old pamphlet fluttered about. I had dismembered the obstacle, and would now collect the fragments. I had got for my pains an old brochure, embellished by dreadful woodcuts, of the old Newgate calender style, and entitled, "The true and genuine history of the murderer, Jane Grierson, who poisoned her mistress, and thereby became the wife of her master, Josiah Temple;" the date 1742. I was no fancier of awful histories of murderers, yet I would read myself asleep amidst horrors rather than lie with my imagination in wakeful subjugation to the images of these eternal Bernards. Bernard still! on the top of the title page was written "Amelia Bernard." The charm was here too. Which of these fair creatures on the wall was the proprietor of this brochure? She had read it surely with care. She must have cherished it, or why identify it as her own? Perhaps she was a lover of old books; it could not be that she was a lover of cruel stories. Those eyes were made for throwing forth the lambent light of affection and love; how unlike to the staring blood-shot orbs of that Jane Grierson on that terrific woodcut! Yet, true to the nature of my species, at least my sex, I found in the grim pamphlet that inexpressible something which recommends coarse recitals of human depravity even to cultivated minds, and which consists probably in the conformity between the thing itself and the description of it; the rugged words, semblances of the rugged implements, and the savage actions of cruelty, address themselves

to the latent barbarism which lies as the lowest stratum of our many piled nature, and receive the savage response at the moment we blush for humanity. These dire images of the murderer's story were stronger than those of the Bernards—even of those lovely faces on the wall—and as the candle burned down, and the red wick grew up, I read and read on, how the cruel fiend did destroy while she fawned upon her victim; how that victim, overcome by the kindness of her enemy, praised her to her husband, who loved his wife to distraction; and how she, even in her devoted gratitude, recommended her murderer as her successor to the bed she lay on, and to those arms where she so often had enjoyed the pressure of his love. Nor was the recommendation ineffectual, for the said wicked Jane did become the wife of her victim's husband. The old horrid savagery of our criminal literature!—not yet abated—never to be abated—only glossed with tropes and figures more hideous than the plain narrative of blood.

It was a vain thought that I should read myself asleep among the terrible images suggested by my brochure. I was even more vigilant than before. Then, that Francis seemed never at rest; I heard him clambering up stairs, tramping along passages, shutting doors, speaking to himself, just as if all the actions of his prior life were being gone over again. I would have another visit, and another long narrative of some Bernard, whose picture was somewhere in a red or blue room, and who had been, as usual, with all those bearded individuals who hung on walls, either at the crusades under Peter the hermit, or at Flodden under James, or at Culloden under Charles. The clock struck, with a sound of grating rust, two; and—tramp, tramp—he trudged along the passage. The door opened, and in came my chronicler.

"Doctor, I saw your light," said he, "and you know it was always my duty, when the family were in their old

home here, to see that all the lights were out o' nights; aye ever after the east wing was burned down, through aunt Marjory's love of reading old romances. I hope I did not disturb you."

"No," replied I; "pray, Francis, I need not ask which of these two pictured beauties is Amelia, my patient? The likeness is good."

"Yes, there she is," said he, with a return of his old enthusiasm. "See her light locks and her blue eyes. She was the mother of that fair child. Don't you see the daughter in the mother and the mother in the daughter? But I cannot look long on these pictures. My heart fails and my head runs round. Look at the dark one. It was a terrible night that when she came to Redcleugh. My wife, who now lies in Deathscroft, down among the elms yonder, could not sleep for the screeching of the owls, as if every horned devil of them shouted woe! woe!—to the house of Redcleugh."

"Nonsense, Francis, omens—all nonsense," I said, interrupting him.

"So said I to Christy, just as you say, doctor. So say we all, every one of us, here and everywhere, always, just until we are pulled up at a jerk by some one of God's acts. when we see His finger pointed to the sign. You are not so old as I am, and have something to learn. Signs are made only when there are to be judgments, and judgments are not according to the common ways of heaven."

"What did Mr. Bernard do," asked I, "to bring upon him this judgment which appears to you to have been so fearful?"

"I am not in the secrets of God's ways with erring man," replied he. "But who can tell how my master got Lillah—that's her there with these dark eyes—his first wife? He had been away for years in the eastern countries, and he never wrote to any one that he was to bring

a wife with him. He brought her, amidst the storm of that fearful night, as if she had been a bird which he had rescued from the blast, so cowering and timid did she appear, always clinging to the laird, and looking at him with such beseeching eyes, and so unlike the women of our land—aye, for it was no northern sun lighted up these eyes; and as for a heathen faith imparting such gentleness, we could understand it no way. 'Twas all a hurry in Redcleugh as well as a sort of fright among us in the hall, every one whispering and wondering and questioning all to no end; for from that night we never knew more of her home or kindred, save that it was suspected she was a Circassian, and had left a noble home for the love she bore to master. Nor was she ever inquired after by her friends, except once, when a great eastern lord, as they said, came in a strange equipage to see her; but her change to a Christian shocked and angered him, so that high words rose and even reached our ears. He spoke of the faith she had forsworn, of Allah, and Mahomet, and the Koran, and she with tears responded Christ, the Saviour of all mankind, and his holy mother, and the cross of Calvary, so that he was made more angry; and then he spoke of Euphrosyne, her mother, as we thought, and again the tears rolled down these cheeks, as she clung to master and lay upon his neck, sobbing as if her heart would burst in the battle between the daughter and the wife. The stranger departed in anger, nor did he break his fast at Redcleugh, and many a day afterwards my young lady was in tears. 'Twas not long till she had that boy, whom she bore after many days of labour, with such pain that there was not a servant in the household did not look as if her own salvation depended upon the issue of that protracted struggle, so beloved was she, sir; so respected, so adored, so pitied; and as for Mr. Bernard, he was not himself—scarcely a man—and little wonder either, for his face was ever the attraction of her

eyes, and every look seemed to be watched by her as it all her happiness hung upon one of his smiles. Such doings were the wonder of us all in these parts; for you know we are rougher lovers in our cold land, and neither Christy, nor I, nor any of us, could understand how, on the face of this earth, there could be such affection—not a single drop of bitterness, not a ruffle on the smooth surface. Why, sir! did we not all, to satisfy our self-love, and our country's custom, call it very idolatry; but it was only a little envy which we, as it were, stole to ourselves, as a sweet unction to our sores, and when these were mended we loved her the more—nay, we could do nothing less; for even the devil's spleen couldn't detect an unevenness to hang upon it a suspicion against her."

"You are even more partial, Francis, than the painter," said I, "whom I have been charging with the fault of drawing upon his fancy to enable him to draw upon our credulity. She looks scarcely earthly."

"It's no use my description, sir. There are certain perfections we cannot attribute to God's creatures, because we suffer by the comparison. They say if there's not now and then a little anger there's a want. Oh! they will say God's image is not perfect if it have not a dash of our own evil in it. But experience is the mother of wonders as well as wisdom. Aye, sir, years of intercourse, even at a servant's distance, are worth more than your theories in these days."

"I suspect you have been in the library, Francis," said I; "you have opened books as well as bottles."

"Aye, sir, and *the book* of all books," replied he seriously; "but I hope I am not irreverend when I say that God may lead us to understand the first image in Eden by showing us sometimes something better here than what we can feel within our own hearts."

"Oh, I am not sceptical," said I; for I thought he was

pained by my remark, as if I doubted the qualities of his idol. "I believe all you have said of poor Lillah; and I love for the sake of my own matrimonial hopes to believe it, and more. But this idol died!"

"And died young, sir; perhaps because she was an idol," replied he. "They don't live long, sir, these creatures. They're like some of those bright winged things of the East, of which I have read, that exist only so long as the rose blooms on which they hang and live. But my lady Lillah never dwined—only there came a sadness over her, and master noticed that she began to cherish more than usual a minature which she carried about with her in her bosom—the figure of a lady—I have seen it often—so like herself you'd have said they were of the same family—'twas her mother, whom she called Euphrosyne. Even now I think I see her sitting in the rose arbour in the garden, with little Caleb by her side, gazing at that picture, so long, so thoughtfully, so pitifully that she seemed ready to weep; then she would, as if recalled by remorse, hug the child, and bid him run for his father; then Mr. Bernard would no sooner come than she would be so much more loving than was even her wont, that he seemed oppressed by the very fervour of her affection. Master was a quiet man, sir, and full of thought; and he soon saw that it would be good for my lady that she should have a companion. So the next thing we heard was that Amelia Temple, who had been governess over the muir at Abbey Field, and had been several times at Redcleuch with Mr. Orchardstoun's daughters, was engaged to come to us at the term. And she came. The wind did not whistle that night, nor the owl sound his horn; there was no omen, sir, and this will please you, though it does not shake me in my faith in heaven's warnings. You see Amelia there (holding up the candle, now nearly in the socket), I need not describe what the painter has copied so faithfully. But master did

not look kindly on that face, beautiful as it is, with that flashing eye and joyful expression. No, 'twas not till my lady grew distractedly fond of her that he looked sweetly on her (in the right way) for the love she gave to and got from her he loved the best of all the world. Oh! 'twas a beautiful sight, sir, those women. The rose of the west was a match for the lily of the east; then the pensive sweetness of the one, and the innocent light-heartedness of the other, met and mingled in a friendship without guile—a love without envy."

"Your last visit, Francis," I said, with a smile which I could not conceal, "must have been to the poets of the library."

"'Tis only truth, sir," resumed he. "When one sees a beautiful thing and feels the beauty—a privilege which is probably never denied at all times to any of God's creatures, and does not belong exclusively to the high born or the learned—he is a poet, be he a gauger or a butler. Aye, sir, a man may be a poet when his nose is right over the mouth of a bottle of burgundy, vintage '81."

"And not very poetical when he reflects that there is not a bottle left in the house," said I.

"He has still 'the pleasures of hope,'" rejoined Francis, with a little newborn moisture on his dry lips.

"Well," rejoined I, as I began to yawn from pure want of sleep, "there is at least little of either poetry or pleasure in 'hope deferred.' We will moisten these dry legends of the Bernards by a little of that burgundy of theirs now."

And this chronicler of the Bernards, as well as of something better than small beer, soon handed me a large glassful of this prince of wines.

"You will require all the benefit of that, sir," said he, "if I am to go on with my story."

"I'm not afraid," said I, listlessly, "after what I have read of the Grierson horrors."

The old man turned upon me a strange, wild look, rendered grotesque, if not ludicrous, by the effect of the glassful he had at that moment taken at my request. "Ah! you have heard—yet surely it is impossible. Was it not all between me and master? Who other could know of it? And the book! Oh, it was never found."

"I know nothing of these mysteries," replied I, not really understanding him, yet amazed at his appearance, as with long grey locks, shaking by his excitement, he kept staring at me in the dim light—for the candle was now out, and the fire burned red and dull. A little more conjuring would have brought all these pictures out into the room, and even as it was, I was beginning to transform my companion's shadow, as it lay on the arm chair behind him, into the very person itself of Lillah Bernard.

"Doctor," he said, gravely, "you must know the dark secret of this apartment."

"Nothing," replied I. "Go on; you have roused my curiosity. I know nothing of the Bernard's but what you have told me, and I request to know more. Go on, Francis."

He was not satisfied; continued to search, so far as he could, my face; but I wore him out.

"It's no use denying it, sir," he at length said, "but take your own way now;" then heaving a deep sigh, which might have been heard at the farthest end of the large room, so silent was all, he went on: "'Twas not to last, sir, all that happiness among those three, and little Caleb was the centre by which they were all joined. There's an enemy abroad to such heart-unions—unseen by all but God, who views him with the eye of anger, but lets him have his way for a season, and why we know it. Such little Edens grow up here and there among roses, as if to remind us of the one paradise which has gone, and to make us hope for the other which is to come; the old tragedy is

wrought within a circuit of a few feet and the reach of a few hearts. Oh! the old fiend triumphs with the old laugh on his dark cheek. Yes, sir, it is even so; there is nothing new with the devil, nor nothing old, nor will there be till his neck is fastened; but in this meanwhile of days and years of time, oh! how the soul pants as it looks through the clouds of sorrow which rise under his dark wing, and can see no light, save through the deep grave where lie those once beautiful things in corruption. 'Twas the beauty did it all, sir; the enemy cannot stand that loveliness; it makes him wild; he raves to get between the hearts and tear them so that the sanctified temples shall have no incense in them—nothing save the heavy odours of carrion. My lady Lillah one day felt a drowsiness come over her; it seemed, as Christy said, she felt only as if she had been inclined to sleep at an unusual time; she made no complaint, but Mr. Bernard observed something in her eye, and his watchfulness took alarm at every turn of her quiet manner. The drowsiness increased, and then it was observed that her pulse was slow and languid; it seemed to beat with fewer pulses every hour, and then master became more alarmed, and Amelia could not be away from her an instant. 'Twas strange the change which all of a sudden took place in Miss Temple; the gay laugh which Mr. Bernard used to encourage as a welcome light thrown on the soul of his wife was no more heard; a pitiful sympathy took its place, and, as Christy described it, looked like the light which we see so beautiful in the thin haze when the sun seems to melt all through it; it was the spirit of love, sir, dissolved in the shadows of grief. She hung over our dear lady as if she would have poured her own spirit into her to raise the still ebbing pulses. Nothing would stop that ebbing; the pulse would beat a little stronger after something given to her, but never quicker. Then these long silken eyelashes fell farther and farther down,

and the voice which had ever been all meekness, fell and fell into half whispers. At length she said something into master's ear; and he motioned to Miss Temple to go out for a little, but Christy remained. It was an awful moment, sir, when she made a sign that she would speak. 'Dear Edward,' she said, as she seemed to try to lift higher the drooping lids, "I will never more see the beautiful valley of the Kabarda, where stands my father's castle, with its gardens and roses of Shiraz. Oh, strange it seems to me, as all the things about me grow dim, the vision of those beloved scenes of my childhood wax brighter and brighter. I hear my father's voice crying Euphrosyne, and my mother's Lillah; my brothers and sisters take up the cry, and the mountaineers salute the favourite daughter of their chief. But she is here in this far land, and you, my best beloved, are there before her. Edward, I am going to die—soon—soon. I wished the dear Amelia away for a little—only a little—to be here again, and never to go more. She is faithful and loving and true. Edward; listen, my love: when I am gone, and you can forget me, take that dear girl into that place where you treasured me—into your affections, as your wife, Edward. The thought pleases me, for I think you will in her marry happiness, and my life seems to ebb away in the hope that you may be with her as you have been with me. Farewell; bring Caleb to kiss me before I go. There is a voice in my ears; it is Allah! Allah! but it is not listened to by the heart which whispers Jesus! the Mediator! the Saviour!'

"And with these words in her lips she died. O, sir, had you seen master—it was pitiful; and as for Amelia, who knew nothing of Lillah's words, she kept weeping till her eyes were inflamed. But the grief was everywhere throughout Redcleugh. It seemed as if some dreadful fate had befallen the whole household; gloom—gloom and sadness all about—in every face—in every heart; for never

was a daughter of Scotland beloved as was this dear lady of the far east; and I think somehow it was her having died so far away from the land of her kindred that softened the hearts of the people, and made them take on as I never saw servants take on for a mistress. 'Twould be a sharp eye, sir, that could distinguish now, in the vault of death's croft, the grey ashes of the beautiful Circassian from the dust of the Bernards—ay, or that of my poor Christian Dempster! It was now a long dark night to the house of Redcleugh, but the longest night is at last awakened by a sun in the morning. Mr. Bernard—always a moody man—scarcely opened his mouth for months and months. He was like a tree, that stands erect after being blasted—it may move by the winds, but the sun has no warmth for it, and there is nothing inside or at the root to give it life. They say that when a beloved wife dies, it is to the husband like the sun going away out of the firmament, and that by-and-by she appears as a pale moon. Ay, sir; everything here is full of change. Mr. Bernard's moon had no waning in it, till he began to catch the echoes of Miss Amelia's voice as he wandered among the woods. It was the grey dawn of another sun, and the sun rose and rose, promising to gild the east again with its glory. The long burden was taken off Amelia. Her laugh began again to enliven Redcleugh, when she saw that Mr. Bernard was able to bear it. Then, sir, to bear it was to begin to love it, for it was the most infectious joyfulness that ever gladdened man's ears. The change, once begun, went on; he hung upon her voice as if it had been music. Every laugh shook him out of his long misery—it appeared to be to him like new life running along the nerves of the old dead tabernacle. So might one think of a man in the desert, as he looks down into the well, with the reflection of the sun in it; the water is drunk in living light; he shakes off all the horrors of his long-borne thirst, and rises renewed and glad. It

was pitiful—yea, it was pleasant too—to see how he followed her, gazed at her, listened to her, just as if he were always praying her, for mercy's sake, to give him some more of that medicine of his spirit. But, perhaps, he never would have thought of marrying Amelia, but for the parting words of Lillah. Christy, in her curious way, said that it was Lillah's moon that lighted him on to the rising of the new sun of Amelia; and as Christy wanted this new match, for the sake of saving, as she thought, the life of our master—it was strange enough that she saw no omens now save good ones; for was it not a good one, that every living thing about Redcleugh looked as joyful as Amelia herself? A wonderful work this world, sir! No magician could have worked a greater wonder than the scene of that marriage after the scene of that death-bed; yet it delighted me to see old Redcleugh all in a blaze again, and to go down into the old catacombs for the old-crusted vintages. Bless your heart!—it was just like the beginning of a new term of life to me. Then the memory of Lillah threw no shade over the scene of enjoyment, for we all knew that if her spirit were not hovering over her beloved Circassia, it would be here looking down on the fulfilment of her dying wish."

Here Francis drew breath, as if to prepare himself for something much more wonderful. It may easily be conceived that he had enlisted my sympathy, as well by the facts of his story, as his manner of telling it; and as one turns to the woodcut of a tale to get his impressions enlivened or verified, I felt a desire to see again, by the light of a candle, the face of the second wife. Francis gratified me by getting another candle, lighting it, and holding it up full in the face of Amelia.

"'Twas all well for Redcleugh for a time," he resumed, "save for me, who lost my dear Christy shortly after Mira was born. That's she there, sir, as I have told you, along-

side of my lady Amelia. When the grief was still heavy upon me, I was surprised by an almost sudden change in Mr. Bernard. I had gone up in the morning, expecting to find him in his dressing-room, which, as you see, enters as well from the lobby as by a door from the parlour, where breakfast was served. As I proceeded along the passage, I saw my lady hurrying away, with her handkerchief over her eyes, and her right hand held up, as if she were addressing Heaven; then deep sobs came from her, and a groan, which burst from the heart as she turned away into the west angle, sounded through the long lobbies and corridors. Master was not in his dressing-room. I heard his voice calling me from his bed-room, and I started at the sound, so unlike his utterance—so deep, heart-ridden, and agonized. On entering, I found him in his morning gown, sitting in that chair; his head thrown back, and his eyes fixed on my lady Lillah's portrait. It seemed, also, as if Amelia could not rest in the room in the west angle, where I thought I had seen her hurrying. Her foot was distinctly heard as she passed again along the lobby, which stretches along to the east tower, and passes this room, where my master and I were. A succession of groans followed, and died away as she receded. Mr. Bernard was too much occupied by some heart-stupefying thought to heed these sounds, and I stood before him not knowing what to say, far less what to do. At length he held up his hands, and placing one on my arm, said, in a voice which seemed the sound of one choking:—

"'Francis, you are an old friend, not a servant—not now at least. I trust you. The house of Redcleugh is doomed, nor shall a Bernard be ever again happy within its walls.'

"'What is wrong, master?' I inquired.

"'The core,' said he; 'the master's heart. I must go to the East again. There may be peace there for me; here,

in my father's house, there is none. But what shall become of Caleb and Mera?'

"My heart was too full to answer, and still Amelia's groans came from the passages, changing and changing, like the voice of a restless spirit. My master rose, and, folding his arms, paced along the room. His brow was knit tight as the muscles would draw. He seemed to contract his arms, as if to compress his heart– nor did a word escape from him. A thought seized me, that, like the older Bernards, he was under a fit of alienation. I made for the door, to seek my lady Amelia, and even in her agonies to consult her what was to be done. My master seized me sharply by the arm.

"'Whither going?' he said.

"'For my lady,' replied I.

"'For Amelia?' he said—'for the murderer of my Lillah, my first love, my angel?'

"I stood petrified, the word 'murderer' twittering on my shaking lips in fragments.

"'Yes,' he said, 'come in, come in—bolt that door; the other is already cared for. Francis, you know how my Lillah died; there was no disease—she slept away as a drugged victim. Now, listen. During this last night I was awoke by the restlessness of Amelia. I heard her leave my side, and rise from the bed'—that on which you are now lying.—'The rush-light burned on the mantelpiece, and I could see my wife, as she rose and began to pace the floor. I called out gently, "Amelia;" but got no answer. Her eyes, I saw, were fixed; and she moved her arms, as if she were addressing some imaginary being. I concluded she was sleep-walking, and immediately she began to speak, as she paced backwards and forwards. Part of what she said I lost, but I could join together enough for conviction.

"'She stood between me and my love,' she said, as she

stopped for a moment, laying one hand upon another, 'and it was necessary she should be put out of the way. A Grierson was never a waverer when a deed of blood was to be done.' 'How did you do it?' 'How did I do it? Poison! I made her sleep the long sleep, which the sun never breaks, nor the moon, nor time.' 'What poison did you say?' 'The sleepy poison. I made for her a draught, that I might draw the sweet life away; and'—

"'She stopped and laughed, as a sleep-walker laughs—hollow and distant.

"'And get into the *Temple* she occupied. Was you still kind to her while you watched the effect of your draught?' 'Was I, did you say? Yes, very kind. Oh! I nursed her dying spirit, that he might think me a ministering angel to his wife, whom I wanted to succeed. He was deceived. Yes, yes; simple fool, he was deceived. Ay, and not deceived, for I loved him.'

"She began to walk again to and fro, sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly, then of a sudden turned and stood—'She was fair,' she continued, as she kept looking at the wall; but so am I. 'He got as good a bargain in me as in her.' Then she made devious movements, turning and returning, muttering to herself, but so thickly that I only caught words much disjointed—'Remorse!—yes, yes!—no, no!—not till I am to be hanged; but that cannot be; no one saw me. Say nothing, nothing!—mix the draught—away to bed. 'Tis late, late! and I am cold.'

"She came to bed, Francis, cold and shivering. My mind began to regain some form of thinking, after having been tossed about by the effect of her horrible monologue, or rather part of a dialogue. The conviction was instant, unavoidable, and certain. I never thought of awakening her to question her, but lay distant from her as from a reptile. I slept none. In the morning she turned to kiss

me. I drew back my head in horror, and saw that she too was horrified at my manner. I bade her begone for a murderer, and, committed thus by my agony, told her she had confessed the whole story in a fit of somnambulism. Then she flew from me, crying she was innocent, tearing her hair in good acting—and there she walks by the passages under the sting of her guilt. Oh! she dare not face me, even were I to allow a meeting, which I wont. Francis, I am convinced.'"

"My master," continued Francis, addressing me as I lay listening and thinking of the old brochure, "was always moody, as I have said—ay, and crotchety; no one had any power to drive from him a settled opinion or resolution. After I had listened to him I said—

"'Master, permit me, your poor servant, to say that this is not evidence on which I would beat a dog."'

"'I am convinced,' he replied sternly and unkindly, and he moved his hand as a sign that I should leave him. I retreated, grieved to the heart, for I knew master's nature. When I got to the top of the stair, I saw my lady beckoning me from the door of the library. I went to her.

"'Francis,' she said, as she shut the door, 'what is this? Has my husband told you anything?'

"'All,' I replied. 'He has recounted to me some strange words uttered by you in your sleep, from which he infers that you poisoned my lady Lillah.'

"'Repeat them—repeat them,' she said hurriedly.

"I did so, and when I mentioned the name Grierson, she seemed to brighten a little. O how she hung upon my words!

"'Francis,' she said, 'I may be saved. You may help me. Some nights ago I was occupied in reading the history of Jane Grierson—a little pamphlet which you will find in the drawer of the escritoire, in the dressing-room. There is the key. That story is the story I had recounted

in my sleep. Go get the book, and bring it to me. That will save me, and nothing but that will save me.'

"'God be praised,' I ejaculated, and then hurried with all speed to get the book. I searched the escritoire; it was not there. I examined other drawers with no better success. At length I returned to my lady, and reported my failure. Without saying a word she hurried away from me, rushed along the lobby, and entered the parlour opening into the dressing-room. Not doubting her word, and agitated by the hope of all being thus satisfactorily explained when the book should be got, I flew to my master's room through the door from the passage.

"'It is all explainable,' I cried, as I entered.

"'Indeed!' answered Mr. Bernard satirically.

"'My lady was some nights ago reading the story of Jane Grierson,' said I, 'and her sleep-walking conversation was only a repetition of the story.'

"'Grierson, Grierson!' cried my master, as he rose frantically, and placed his hand on his forehead. 'Yes, yes! she mentioned the word. I have never thought of that. Yes! yes! show me that book, and I shall be satisfied.'

"I ran immediately to the door leading to the dressing-room, where I heard my lady searching. Master had shut it. He opened it for me by the key which he held in his hand, and locked it as I passed out. It seemed he wanted no interview till the book should be got. Amelia was there, searching and searching, trembling and sighing.

"'What means this?' she ejaculated, as she proceeded —then paused. 'I must have placed it in the trunk, from whence I took it;' and she rushed away to the room where the trunks lay, which she had brought with her to Redcleugh.

"'Twas all in vain. That book could not be got, sir. That book was never found. No copy of it could be pro-

cured. The loss of that book was the ruin of the house of Redcleugh."

There it is, said I, holding up the tattered brochure to the wondering eyes of the old butler.

"Gracious Heaven!" cried the old man. "Yet not gracious—too late, too late!" and he staggered, like one who is drunk. Mr. Bernard is dead.

And Amelia is mad, said I, sorrowfully.

"Yes, mad," said he, as he still gazed on the brochure, and turned it over and over with trembling hands.

"But how did you come to get this," he inquired.

I told him, and he rose and hastened to the escritoire to examine it, and satisfy himself of the truth of my statement.

"When that book could not be found, sir," he resumed when he came back, "my master put his resolution into effect. He placed his children with Mr. Gordon, one of his trustees, executed a settlement, and went to the East. My lady Amelia never saw him from that morning, but he left word with me, that if the pamphlet was found in the house, he should be made acquainted with it through his trustee, Mr. Gordon. But, ah! sir, that never happened, in God's mysterious providence; and now my poor lady Amelia could receive no advantage from this proof of her innocence. I have heard from her own lips, before her reason gave way, that she was the grand-daughter of Jane Grierson and Mr. Temple, and that was the reason why she came to have this little book. The story haunted her, yet she read it; while, at the same time, she concealed her possession of it, and her connection with the parties.

Francis now left me, and if I had little inclination to sleep before, I had less now. All the strange incidents of the story seemed to revolve round myself; though my part in it seemed merely the result of chance, I appeared to myself somehow as a directly-appointed agent for working

out some design of Providence. Yet what I was required to do I did not know. I cogitated and recogitated, and came to no conclusion as to how I should act; only I saw no great benefit in the meantime in endeavouring to make any use of the pamphlet for the purpose of recovering the aberrant reason of the poor lady. At length I fell asleep, and next morning awoke to the strange recollections of what had occurred so shortly before. I saw Amelia again; she was depressed and moody; the fiend within her was dormant, but its weight pressed on the issues of thought, and her vacant stare told unutterable woe.

I left Redcleugh without much hope, intending to pay another visit shortly afterwards. About three or four days after reaching home, a letter came to me from Francis, inclosing one from Mr. Gordon, the latter of which contained the intelligence that there had been some mistake as to the report of Mr. Bernard's death. A gentleman of the same name had died at Aleppo, but the master of Redcleugh was still alive. A gleam of the sunshine of hope darted through my mind. The dark images of the story were illumined—even the figure of that poor lady enshrined in the gloom of sorrow became bright with lustrous, meaning, intelligent eyes. Within an hour I had a letter posted for Mr. Gordon, informing him of the finding of the pamphlet, and requesting him to send for Mr. Bernard by an express messenger.

In the meanwhile I visited Mrs. Bernard regularly, though the distance was much beyond my usual journeys. Some parts of the intelligence were broken to her through the medium of Francis, but without any marked result, if exacerbations were not more frequent, ending in deeper depression; as if a wild hope had risen and died away in the absence of anything visible or tangible to justify it to the erring but suspicious judgment of the victim of despair. Other preparations were made; the old servants recalled;

and Francis was glorying in the prospect of a restoration of the old ways, if not the very continuation of that broken happiness of which he was so full. At length Mr. Bernard arrived, along with Caleb and Mira. Mr. Gordon was along with them, and I was sent for. We were all assembled without Mrs. Bernard being aware of our presence in the house. I counselled caution, and Mira was introduced to the mother alone; but the child retreated under the fear of a scream which might betoken either joy or despair; nor did her mother ask for her again—a strange circumstance, and not of good omen; but we behoved to persevere, and Mr. Bernard himself, accompanied by Mr. Gordon and me, presented ourselves before her. Was there ever a meeting under such circumstances? The husband clasped the unconscious wife to his bosom. I stood to watch the effect of an act which I considered precipitate, if not imprudent. The moment she felt herself in the arms of her husband she struggled to release herself, uttered the loudest scream I ever heard from her, and fell in a swoon upon the floor. That swoon gave me hopes, for in confirmed madness we do not often find that moral causes working on the mind show any power over the body. When she recovered, and was placed in a chair, she panted for breath, like one choking; and waving her hands and grasping convulsively the clothes of those next to her, seemed as if she were testing the reality of all these appearances, as things new and wonderful and incredible. I then held out to her the pamphlet, in all its tattered condition. The effect was extraordinary. She clutched it with such an intensity of grasp that she crumpled it all up, and then tried with trembling hands to undo the crushed leaves, some of which fell at her feet. I watched the rise of the natural expression of wonder struggling through the look of insanity; but I could discover no joy, only something like fear. I still augured favourably. She was laid upon her bed, and

in about an hour afterwards fell into a troubled sleep. A day passed, yet amid my hopes I could see nothing on which I could absolutely rely as an undoubted sign of a favourable change, till on the evening of the second day, hen she burst into a flood of tears. I had Mr. Bernard at her side at the end of this paroxysm, and in a very short time she was hanging upon his neck, sobbing like a child who is reconciled to its mother.

Under a date some six months after these indications of Amelia's convalescence, I find a note in my diary, "Dined at Redcleugh with Mr. and Mrs. Bernard; the invalid restored, and again the object of her husband's affection; the butler once more the pride of his major-domoship; the old Burgundy produced and declared better than ever; heard that musical laugh which once charmed Mr. Bernard from the depth of his sorrow, as it now mingled, like a fluid, with the glory of a summer sun shining through the green blinds, and spread joy throughout the old house of Redcleugh."

THE ROTHESAY FISHERMAN.

When I was a boy, I used to pass the summer vacation in the Isle of Bute, where my father had a small cottage, for the convenience of sea-bathing. I enjoyed my sea-side visits greatly, for I was passionately fond of boating and fishing, and, before I was sixteen, had become a fearless and excellent swimmer. From morning till night, I was rambling about the beach, or either sailing upon or swimming in the beautiful Frith. I was a prime favourite among the fishermen, with most of whom I was on familiar terms, and knew them all by name. Among their number was one man who particularly attracted my attention, and excited my curiosity. He was civil and obliging, though distant and reserved in his manners, with a shade of habitual melancholy on his countenance, which awakened my sympathy, at the same time that his "bearing," which was much above his station, commanded my respect. He *appeared* to be about sixty years of age; particularly prepossessing in his appearance; and his language and demeanour would have done honour to any rank of society. I felt involuntarily attracted towards him, and took every opportunity of showing my wish to please and become better acquainted with him; but in vain. He seemed gratified by my attentions; but I made no nearer approach to his confidence. He went, among his companions, by the name of "Gentleman Douglas;" but they appeared to be as ignorant of the particulars of his history as myself. All they knew of him was, that he had come among them a perfect stranger, some years before, no one knew from whence; that he seemed to have some means of support independent

of his boat; and that he was melancholy, silent, and reserved—as much as possible avoiding all communication with his neighbours. These particulars only served to whet my boyish curiosity, and I determined to leave no means untried to penetrate to the bottom of Douglas' mystery. Let me do myself justice, however: my eagerness to know his history proceeded from an earnest desire to soothe his sorrow, whatever it might be, and to benefit him in any way in my power. Day after day I used to stroll down to the beach, when he was preparing to get his boat under way, and volunteer to pull an oar on board. At first he seemed annoyed by my officiousness; and, though he always behaved with civility, showed, by his impatient manner, that he would rather dispense with my company; but the constant dripping of water will wear away a stone, and hard indeed must be the heart that will not be softened by unremitting kindness. My persevering wish to please him gradually produced the desired effect—he *was* pleased, and evinced it by his increasing cordiality of manner, and by the greater interest he seemed to take in all my movements. In a short time we became inseparables, and his boat hardly ever left the shore without me. My father was not at all adverse to my intimacy with Douglas; he knew him to be a sober, industrious man, and one who bore an irreproachable moral character; and as he was anxious that I should strengthen my constitution as much as possible in the sea-breeze, he thought I could not roam about under safer or less objectionable protection. On a further acquaintance with Douglas, I found him a most agreeable companion; for, when his reserve wore off, his conversation was amusing and instructive; and he had tales to tell of foreign lands and of distant seas, which he described with that minuteness and closeness which only a personal acquaintance with them could have produced. Often, in the course of his narration, his eye

would brighten and his cheek glow with an emotion foreign to his usual calm and melancholy manner; and then he would suddenly stop, as if some sound he had uttered had awakened dark memories of the past, and the gloom clouded his brow again, his voice trembled, and his cheek grew pale. These sudden transitions alarmed and surprised me; my suspicions were excited, and I began to imagine that the man must have been guilty of some unknown and dreadful crime, and that conscience was at such times busy within him. Douglas must have observed my changing manner; but it made little alteration in his demeanour towards myself.

"What is the matter, Douglas?" said I, one day, when I observed him start and turn pale at some casual observation of mine.

"Do not indulge a vain and idle curiosity, Master Charles, at the expense of another's feelings," replied he, gravely and mournfully, "nor endeavour to rake up the ashes of the past. The heart knows its own bitterness: long may yours be a stranger to sorrow! I have observed, with pain, that you, as others have done, begin to look upon me with suspicion. Be satisfied with the assurance, that I have no crimes needing concealment, to reproach myself with; and the sorrows of age should be sacred in the eyes of youth."

I was humbled by the old man's reproof, and hastened to express my concern for having hurt his feelings.

"Enough said, enough said, Mr. Charles," said he; "curiosity is natural at your age, and I am not surprised at your wishing, like some of your elders, to learn the cause of the melancholy which hangs over me like a cloud, darkening the path of life, and embittering all its pleasures. At some future time I will tell you the reason why you see me what I am; but I cannot now—the very thought of it unmans me."

Time wore on; every year I returned to the sea-side during the summer, and was always welcomed with unaffected cordiality by my old ally, Douglas. I was now a strapping youth of nineteen, tall and powerful of my age —thanks to the bracing sea-air and constant exercise. One day Douglas told me he was going over to Largs, and asked if I would accompany him.

"With all my heart," said I; and in ten minutes we were standing across the Frith with a fine steady breeze. We were close over to the Ayrshire coast, when a sudden puff of wind capsized the boat, and we were both thrown into the water. When I rose to the surface again, after my plunge, I looked around in vain for Douglas, who had disappeared. He had on a heavy pea-jacket, and I was at first afraid the weight and encumbrance of it must have sunk him; but, on second thoughts, I dived under the boat, and found him floundering about beneath the sail, from whence I succeeded with great difficulty in extricating him. He was quite exhausted, and it required all my strength to support him to the gunnel of the boat. After hanging on there some time, to recover breath, we swam together to the beach, which was not far distant. When we landed, he seated himself on a large stone, and remained silent for some time, with his face buried in his hands.

"Douglas," said I, wondering at his long silence, "are you hurt?"

To my great surprise I heard low sobs, and saw the tears trickling between his fingers. Thinking that he was grieved at the loss of his boat, I said—

"Cheer up, man! If the boat be lost, we will manage among us to get another for you."

"'Tisn't the boat, sir, 'tisn't the boat; we can soon raise *her* again: it is your kindness that has made a fool of me."

He then looked up in my face, and, drying his glistening

cheek with one hand, he shook mine long and heartily with the other.

"Mr. Charles, before I met you, I thought I was alone in the world; shunned by most around me as a man of mystery. Because I could not join in their rude sports and boisterous merriment, they attributed my reserve and visible dejection to sinister causes—possibly to some horrible and undiscovered crime." A blush here flitted across my countenance; but Douglas did not remark it. "Young, and warm, and enthusiastic, *you* sought me out with different feelings; you were attracted towards me by pity, and by a generous desire to relieve my distress. It was not the mere impulse of a moment; your kindness has been constant and unwavering—and now you have crowned all by saving my life. I hardly know whether or not to thank you for what was so worthless to myself; but I *do* thank you from the bottom of my heart for the friendly and generous feeling which actuated you. You shall know the cause of the sorrow that weighs upon my heart; I would not that one to whom I owe so much should look upon me with the slightest shade of suspicion. I think, when you know my story, you will pity and sympathize with me; but you will judge less harshly, I doubt not, than I do of myself."

"Do not call up unnecessary remembrances, which harrow your feelings, Douglas. That I have often thought there is mystery about you, I will not deny; but only once did the possibility of a cause of guilt flash across my mind. That unworthy suspicion has long past, and I am now heartily ashamed of myself for having harboured it for a moment. But we are forgetting the boat; we must try to get assistance to right her."

We soon fell in with one of the fishermen on the coast, with whose assistance she was speedily righted and baled out; and, after having done what we came for at Largs, we returned homewards.

"Meet me to-morrow at ten o'clock, Mr. Charles," said Douglas, at he grasped my hand at parting, "and you shall then hear my story, and judge whether or not I have cause to grieve."

At the appointed hour next morning I hastened to the rendezvous. The fisherman was already there, waiting for me.

"I daresay you are surprised to see me here so soon," said he; "but now that I have determined to make you my confidant, I feel eager to disburden my mind, and to seek relief from my sorrows in the sympathy of one whom I am so proud to call my friend.

I was not always in the humble station in which you now see me, Mr. Stewart; but, thank Heaven! it was no misconduct of my own that occasioned the change. My father was an English clergyman, whose moderate stipend denied to his family the luxuries of life; but we had reason to acknowledge the truth of the wise man's saying, that 'a dinner of herbs, where love is," is better than more sumptuous fare where that love is not. We were a united and a happy family, contented with the competence with which Providence had blessed us, and pitying, not envying, those who, endowed with greater wealth, were exposed to greater temptations. Oh! those happy, happy days! It sometimes almost maddens me, Mr. Stewart, to compare myself, as I am now, with what I was then. Every morning I rose with a light and happy heart, exulting in the sunbeam that awakened me with its smile, and blessing, in the gladfulness of youthful gratitude, the gracious Giver of light and life. My heart overflowed with love to all created beings. I could look back without regret, and the future was bright with hope. And now, what am I? A broken-hearted man, but still, after all my sufferings, grateful to the hand which has chastened me. I can picture the whole family grouped on a summer evening, now,

Mr. Stewart, as vividly as a sight of yesterday, though fifty years have cast their dark shadows between. My mother, seated beside her work-table under the neat verandah in front of our cottage, encouraging my sisters, with her sweet smile and gentle voice, in the working of their first sampler; my father, seated with his book, under the shade of his favourite laburnum tree; while my brother and I were trundling our hoops round the garden, shouting with boyish glee; and my little fair-haired cousin, Julia, tottering along with her little hands extended, to catch the butterfly that tempted her on from flower to flower. My brother Henry was two years younger than myself, and was at the time I speak of a remarkably handsome, active boy, of ten years of age—full of fun and mischief, unsteady and volatile. My father found considerable difficulty in confining Henry's attention to his studies; for, though uncommonly quick and intelligent, he wanted patience and application. He could not bear the drudgery of poring over musty books. He used to say to me—"How I should like to be an officer, a gallant naval officer, to lead on my men through fire and smoke to victory!" And then the little fellow would wave his hand, while the colour flushed his cheeks, and shout—"Come on! come on!" He had, somehow or other, got possession of an old naval chronicle; and from that moment his whole thoughts were of ships and battles, and his principal amusement was to launch little fleets of ships upon the pond at the bottom of the garden. My father, though mild and indulgent in other matters, was a strict disciplinarian in education; and often did I save Henry from punishment by helping him with his exercises and other lessons. Dearly did I love my gallant, high-spirited little brother; and he looked up to me with equal fondness.

I will not weary you with details, but at once jump over the next twelve years of my life. The scene was now

greatly changed at the parsonage. Death had been busy among its inmates; a contagious disorder had carried off my mother and sisters, and my poor father was left alone in his old age—not alone, for Julia was still with him. I forgot to say before, that she was the orphan daughter of his elder brother. Julia, at sixteen, was beautiful. I will not attempt to describe her, although every feature, every expression of her lovely countenance, is vividly pictured in my heart. She was its light, its pride, its hope. Alas! alas! she had grown up like a sweet flower beside me, and, from her infancy, had clung to me with a sister's confidence, and more than a sister's affection. Was it wonderful that I loved her? Yes, I loved her fondly and devotedly; and I soon had the bliss of knowing that my affection was returned. I had been for some time at college, studying for the church, when a distant relation died, and left me a comfortable competency. My father now consented with pleasure to my union with Julia; and a distant day was fixed for the marriage, to enable my brother Henry to be present. He had been abroad for some time in the merchant service, and his constant employment had prevented his visiting home for many years; but he had written to say that he expected now to have a long holiday with us. At length he returned, and great was my joy at meeting my beloved brother once more. He was a fine, handsome, manly-looking fellow—frank and boisterous in his manner, kind and generous in his disposition, but the slave of passion and impulse. In a week after his return, he became dull and reserved, and every one remarked the extraordinary change that had come over him. My father and I both thought that our quiet and monotonous life wearied and disgusted him, and that he longed for the more bustling scenes to which he had been accustomed. "Come, Harry!" said I to him one day, "cheer up, my boy! we shall be merry enough soon: you must lay in a

fresh stock of spirits; Julia will quarrel with you if you show such a melancholy phiz at our wedding." He turned from me with impatience, and, rushing out into the garden, I saw no more of him that day. I was hurt and surprised by his manner, and hastened to express my annoyance to Julia. She received me with less than her usual warmth, blushed when I talked of my brother, and soon left me on some trifling pretext. My father had gone to visit a neighbouring clergyman, at whose house he was taken suddenly and alarmingly ill. I hastened to his bedside, and found him in such a precarious state, that I determined upon remaining near him. I therefore despatched a messenger to Julia, informing her of my intention, and intimating that it would be necessary to postpone our marriage, which was to have taken place in the course of a week, until my father's recovery. In answer to my letter, I received a short and hurried reply, merely acquiescing in the propriety of my movements, and without any expression of regret at my lengthened absence. Surprised at the infrequency and too apparent indifference of Julia's answers to the long and impassioned letters which I almost daily wrote to her, alarmed at the long interval which had elapsed since I last heard from her, and fearing that illness might have occasioned her silence, I left my father, who was rapidly recovering, and hastened home. When I arrived at the parsonage, I walked into the drawing-room; but as neither Julia nor my brother was there, I concluded they were out walking, and, taking a book, I sat down, impatiently waiting their return. Some time having elapsed, however, without their making their appearance, I rang the bell; and our aged servant, on entering, started at seeing me there.

"La, sir!" said she, "I did'nt expect to see *you!*"

"Where are Miss Julia and my brother?"

"Why, la, sir! I was just agoing to ask *you*. Miss Julia

had a letter from you about a week ago, and she and Mr. Henry went off in a poshay together next day. They said they would be back to-day."

I said not a word in reply, but buried my face in my folded arms on the table, while the cold perspiration flowed over my brow, and my heart sickened within me, as the fatal truth by degrees broke upon me.

"Fool, fond fool, that I was, to have been so long blind!" muttered I; "but it cannot be!—Julia!—*my* Julia!—no, no!" And I almost cursed myself for the unworthy suspicion. But why dwell longer upon these moments of agony? My first surmise was a correct one. In a week's time all was known. My brother, my brother Harry, for whom I would have sacrificed fortune, life itself, had betrayed my dearest trust, and had become the husband of her I had fondly thought my own. The blow was too sudden and overpowering; I sunk beneath it. My reason became unsettled, and for several months I was unconscious of my own misery. I awoke to sense, an altered man. My heart was crushed, my very blood seemed to be turned into gall; I hated my kind, and resolved to seclude myself for ever from a world of falsehood and ingratitude. The only tie which could have reconciled me to life had been wrenched away from me during my unconsciousness: my brother's misconduct had broken my father's heart, and I was left alone in the world. I paid one sad visit to my father's grave, shed over it bitter tears of sorrow and disappointment, and from that hour to this I have never seen the home in which I passed so many happy days. Some months afterwards, I received a letter from a friend residing in Wales, of a very extraordinary nature, requiring me instantly to visit him, and stating that he had something of importance to communicate to me. I knew the writer, and confided in him; he had known my misfortune, and wept with me over the loss of

my Julia and of my father. I hastened to him on the wings of expectation, and, when I arrived, was taken by him into an inner apartment of his house, with an air of secrecy and mystery.

"Have you yet recovered from the effects of your misfortunes?" said he. "I have often reflected on your extraordinary fate, and pitied you from the innermost recesses of my soul. Would you believe it? I have in store for you an antidote against the grief of your ruined affections; but I will not say a medicine for your pain, or a balm for your sorrow."

"For a broken heart," said I, "there is no cure in this world."

He looked at me, and wept.

"Dress yourself in this suit of my mournings," he said, "and accompany me whither I will lead you."

I gazed at him in amazement; but he left me to put on the weeds, and to torture myself with vain thoughts.

He returned and called me out. I followed him. We went some little distance, and joined a funeral that was slowly proceeding to the burying-ground. My confusion prevented me from looking at the time to see who was chief mourner. I proceeded with the mourners, and soon stood on the brink of the grave. When the pall was taken off, and the coffin lowered down into the earth, my eye caught the inscription on the plate; it was—"J. M., aged 20." "So young!" muttered I; and at the same moment I glanced at the chief mourner. He had withdrawn his handkerchief from his face. Our eyes met—he turned deadly pale, and made a motion as if to leave the ground; but I sprang forward, almost *shrieking* 'Henry!' and detained him. I looked in his face. Oh, what a change was there! His eye quailed beneath the cold, steady, withering glance of mine. I felt that he read the meaning of that glance, for he absolutely writhed beneath it.

"Do not revile me, brother," murmured he; "the hand of Heaven has been heavy upon me; my crime has already met with its punishment. Oh, my poor, poor Julia!"

"Where, where is she?" wildly exclaimed I. He pointed to the new-made grave?

Oh, the bitterness of that hour! We wept—the betrayer and the betrayed wept together over the grave of their buried hopes. I arose calm and collected. "Brother," said I, giving him my hand, "my animosity shall be buried with her; may your own heart forgive you as freely as I do the injury you have done me! But we must never meet more." And, with slow steps and aching heart, I turned and left the spot.

I received a letter from Henry some time afterwards, from one of the outports, telling me that he was just on the point of leaving England for ever, and imploring my forgiveness in the most touching terms, "for the sake of our early days, the happy years of our boyhood." Those early days—those happy days!—my heart softened towards him as I thought of them. Sorely as he had wronged me, he was my brother still, and I felt that I could, if permitted, clasp him to my heart once more.

Weary of life, and tired of the world, I dragged on a miserable existence for some time, in a secluded situation on the shores of Cornwall; but, by degrees, the monotony of my sedentary and recluse life wearied me. I began to associate with the poor fishermen around me, and, in a short time, became enthusiastically fond of their perilous and exciting mode of life. The sea became to me quite a "passion"—my mind had found a new channel for its energies; and when, a short time afterwards, I lost my little fortune through the mismanagement or villany of my agent, I took staff in hand, and, hastening to Liverpool, boldly launched into life again as a common seaman, on board a merchant vessel bound to the West Indies.

I had toiled on for several years as a common seaman, during which time I attracted the notice of my captain, by my indefatigable attention to the duties of my station, and by the reckless indifference with which I lavished my strength, and often risked my life, in the performance of them.

"Douglas" (for that was the name which I had assumed), "Douglas," said the captain to me one day, after I had been particularly active during a heavy gale we encountered, "I must try if I cannot do something for you; your activity and energy entitle you to promotion. I will speak to the owners when we return, and endeavour to procure you a mate's berth." I thanked him, and went forward again to my duty. A few days afterwards, we were going along with a strong beaming wind; there was a high sea running, every now and then throwing a thick spray over the weather bulwarks; the hands were at dinner, and I was just coming up to relieve the man at the wheel; there was no one on deck but the mate of the watch, and the captain, who was standing on the weather bulwark, shaking the backstays, to feel if they bore an equal strain: all at once the ship gave a heavy weather lurch, the captain lost his footing, and was overboard in a moment. I instantly sprang aft, cut away the life-buoy, and knowing that he was but an indifferent swimmer, jumped overboard after him. As I said before, the sea was running high, and a few minutes elapsed before I caught sight of him, rising on the crest of a wave, at some distance from me. I saw he could not hold out long; for he was over-exerting himself, shouting and raising his hand for assistance, and his face was pale as death. I struck out desperately towards him, and shouted, when I got near him, "Keep up your heart, sir; be cool; don't attempt to lay hold of me, and, please God, I will save you yet." My advice had the desired effect, and restored his self-possession; he became more cool and collected, and with occasional support from me, contrived

to reach the life-buoy. In the meantime, all was confusion on board the ship; the second mate of the watch, a young hand, in the hurry of the moment, threw the ship too suddenly up to the wind, a squall struck her at the moment, and the foretopmast and topgallantmast went over the side, dragging the maintopgallantmast with them. The cry of "A man overboard!" had hurried the crew on deck, and the crash of the falling spars, and the contradictory orders from the quarter-deck, at first puzzled and confused them; but the *chief* mate was a cool, active seaman, and the moment he made his appearance order and silence were restored; the quarter-boat was instantly lowered, numbers of the men springing forward to volunteer to man her, for the captain was deservedly beloved by his crew; and the rest of the hands were immediately set to work to clear away the wreck. In a few minutes the boat reached us, and we were safely seated in the stern sheets.

"Douglas, my gallant fellow," said the captain, shaking me cordially by the hand, "I may thank *you* that I am not food for the fishes by this time. I had just resigned myself to my fate, when your voice came over the water to me, like a messenger of hope and safety. How can I ever repay you?"

"I am sufficiently repaid, Captain Rose, by seeing you beside me; the only way in which you can serve me, is by giving me a lift in the way of promotion, when we return home."

"I will, you may depend upon it," replied he; "and as long as I live, you may apply to me as a firm and faithful friend.

I was highly gratified by this promise; for the great object of my ambition for some time past had been to raise myself again from obscurity into something like my former station in life. Next voyage, through the captain's interest with the owners, I was appointed chief mate of the Albion,

Captain Rose's ship, for which I was found duly qualified, having employed all my spare hours at sea in acquiring a knowledge of the theory of navigation. Captain Rose was like a brother to me, introducing me to his family and friends as the saver of his life, and making quite a *lion* of me in Liverpool. We sailed in company with a large fleet, under convoy of three frigates and two sloops of war, and had been some time at sea when a heavy gale of wind came on one afternoon, which completely dispersed the convoy. When it commenced there were nearly two hundred sail in sight; at the end of two days, we were alone. The Albion was a beautiful vessel of her class, about four hundred tons burden; an excellent sea-boat. We had a smart active crew, besides a number of passengers, and were well furnished for defence, if required; but we were now so near our port that we dreaded little danger. However, it was necessary to be constantly on the alert, for there were many piratical vessels in those seas, which, in spite of the vigilance and activity of H.M. cruisers, were constantly on the watch to pounch upon any stray merchantmen. Capt. Rose was, on the whole, rather pleased at his separation from the convoy, as there were only one or two other vessels, besides himself, bound to the Havannah, and he would have been obliged to accompany the body of the fleet to Barbadoes. After we had parted from the convoy, we made the best of our way towards Cuba. One night, it was almost calm, but with every appearance of a coming breeze; the moon was nearly at her full, but dark, heavy clouds were drifting quickly over her, which almost entirely hid her from our view, except when, at intervals, she threw from between them a broad flash over the waters, as bright and almost as momentary as lightning gleams. We were crawling slowly along, with all our small canvas set; the breeze was blowing off the shore, the dark shadow of which lay like a shroud upon the water; it was

nearly eight bells in the first watch; the captain and several of the passengers were still on deck, enjoying the cool, delightful breeze; but their suspicious and anxious glances into the dark shadow to windward, seemed to intimate that their conversation over their grog that evening, which had been of the pirates that infested those islands, and Cuba in particular, had awakened their fears and aroused their watchfulness.

"Hark! Captain Rose," said I, "what noise is that?"

Every face was instantly turned over the weather gunwale, and in breathless silence they all listened in the direction to which I pointed. A low, murmuring, rippling sound was heard, and a kind of dull, smothered, creaking noise repeated at short intervals; nothing was to be seen, however, for all was in deep shadow in that quarter.

"Talk of the devil, and he'll show his horns, Douglas!" said the captain. "I have not been so long at sea without being able to distinguish the whispering of the smooth water when a sharp keel is slipping through it, or the sound of muffled sweeps. There may be mischief there, or there may not; but we'll be prepared for the worst. Get the men quietly to their quarters, put an extra dose of grape into the guns, and have all our tools ready."

Just at this moment the moonlight broke brightly through the clouds, and showed us a small, black-looking schooner, slowly crawling out from the shadow of the land. Her decks were apparently crowded with people, and she had a boat towing astern. The men were soon at their quarters—and a fine, active, spirited set of fellows they were—each armed with a cutlass and a brace of pistols, while tomahawks and boarding pikes lay at hand for use if required. The passengers were all likewise provided with muskets, pistols, and cutlasses, and the servants were ready to load spare fire-arms. We mustered about fifty in all; but there was not a flincher among us.

"Now, my lads;" said Captain Rose to his crew, "we must have a brush for it. I have no doubt those fellow are pirates; and if once they get footing on this deck, I would not give a farthing for any man's life on board. Be cool and quiet. Don't throw away a shot; remember that you are fighting for your lives; I do not doubt your courage, but be cool and steady!"

In the meantime, the dark hull of the schooner was gradually nearing us.

"Schooner ahoy!" shouted Captain Rose. No answer; but the sweeps dipped faster into the water, which rippled up beneath her bow. "Schooner, ahoy!—answer, or I'll fire!" Still no reply; but, almost immediately, a bright sudden flash burst from her bow, and a shot came whizzing through the mizen-rigging.

"I thought so," calmly said the captain; "be cool, my lads; we must not throw away a shot; he's hardly within our range yet." The moon broke out for a moment. "Now, my lads, take time, and a steady aim. Give it him!" And flash, flash—bang, bang, went all our six carronades. The captain's advice had not been thrown away; the aim had been cool and deliberate; we heard the loud crashing of the sweeps as the grape-shot rattled among them, and fell pattering into the water; and at the same time a yell arose from the schooner, as if all the devils in hell were broke loose. The next glimpse of moonlight showed us her foretopmast hanging over the side.

"Well done, my fine fellows!" shouted Captain Rose "bear a hand, and give them another dose. We must keep them at arms' length as long as we can." The schooner had by this time, braced up on the larboard tack, and was standing the same way as ourselves, so as to bring her broadside to bear upon us; and seemed to be trying to edge out of the range of our guns.

"Oh, oh," said our gallant captain, "is that your play,

old boy? You want to pepper us at a distance: that'll never do. Starboard, my boy!—So! steady! Now, my lads, fire way!"—And again our little bark shook with the explosion. The schooner was not slow in returning the compliment. One of her shot lodged in our hull and another sent the splinters flying out of the boat on the booms. Immediately after she fired, she stood away before the wind, and, rounding our stern at a respectful distance, she crawled up on the other side of us, as fast almost as if we had been at anchor, with a wish apparently to cut off our escape in that direction. But he was playing a deeper game. A long, dark, unbroken cloud was passing over the moon, which threw its black shadow over the water, and partially concealed the movements of the pirate. When it cleared away again, he was braced sharp up on the larboard tack, standing across our bows, with the intention of raking us.

"Starboard the helm!—Brace sharp up!—Bear a hand, my fine fellows!"—And, before she had time to take advantage of her position, the Albion again presented her broadside. The flash from the pirate's guns was quickly followed by the report of ours, and we heard immediately the loud clattering of blocks on board of her, as if some sail had come down by the run. At this moment, I thought I heard some strange noise astern, and, running aft, I plainly distinguished the sound of muffled oars, and, immediately after, saw a small dark line upon the water.

"Aft, here, small-arm men!" shouted I.

"Boat, ahoy!—Boat, ahoy!"—A loud and wild cheer rose from the boat; and the men in her, finding that caution would no longer avail them, evidently redoubled their efforts at their oars.

"Fire!" shouted the captain, while a blue light he had just ignited threw a pale unearthly glare over the ship's tafferel, and showed us our new and unexpected enemy.

It was the pirate's boat, which she had dropped during the partial obscurity I spoke of, intending to board us a-head herself, while the boat's crew attacked us astern. It was fortunate that we happened to hear them—three minutes more and nothing could have saved us. There was a set of the most ferocious-looking desperadoes I had ever seen, armed to the teeth; and the boat (a large one) was crowded with them. Deadly was the effect of our fire. Four or five of the men at the oars were tumbled over on their faces; but their places were instantly supplied by others, who, with loud yells for revenge, bent desperately to their oars. In a few minutes the boat shot up under the mizen-chains, while the bullets that were raining down upon them from above only rendered them more desperate. The living trampled upon the dying and the dead, in their eargerness to board; and, in a thick swarm, the blood-thirsty scoundrels came yelling over the bulwarks. A sharp and well-directed fire staggered them for a moment, and sent several of them to their last account. We now threw aside the muskets, for cutlasses and tomahawks. Hand to hand, foot to foot, desperate and deadly was the struggle.

"Down with them, my lads!" shouted Rose. "Hew the blood-thirsty villains to pieces. No quarter! no quarter!—show them such mercy as they would show you!"

Short and bloody was the conflict; several of the pirates had been killed, the deck was slippery with blood, and the rest were keeping their ground with difficulty. I had a long and severe hand-to-hand fight with one of them. We had each received desperate wounds, when his foot slipped on the bloody deck. I gave him a severe stroke on the head with a tomahawk, and, after a deadly struggle on the gang-way, tumbled him backwards overboard. The moon shone bright out at the moment, and fell full upon his face. Merciful heaven!—my brain reeled, I staggered against a gun, and became insensible—that face, Mr. Stewart, haunts

my dreams to this hour with its ghastly, despairing expression. It was the long-lost Henry's—I was my brother's murderer! (Here the poor fellow hid his face in his hands, and groaned with agony. I pitied him from my heart; but I knew that sorrow such as his "will not be comforted" in the moment of its strength; so I sat in silence beside him, till his first burst of grief was over, and then I endeavoured calmly and coolly to reason with him on the subject, and to persaude him, by all the arguments I could think of, that he had no cause to reproach himself with what had happened).

"It is kindly meant of you, Mr. Stewart (said he, mournfully shaking his head), kindly meant, but in vain! I know that I was only acting in self-defence—that it was life against life—that I was perfectly justified, in the eyes of men, in taking the life of him who would have taken mine—but I cannot drive that last despairing look from my memory. I feel as if my brother's blood were crying out against my soul. O my poor Harry! would that the blow had fallen on my head instead of thine!—would that I had had time to tell thee how fondly I loved thee, how freely I forgave thee!

"But I beg pardon, Mr. Stewart;—I must go on with my tale. Ten of the pirates were lying dead on the deck, and five of our poor fellows; the bodies of the former were immediately thrown overboard, and the others were laid side by side amidships, till we could find time to give them Christian burial. Our last lucky shot had prevented the pirate from carrying the other part of his scheme into effect: the moon was now shining out full and clear, and by her light we saw that her throat halyards had been shot away, and her main-sail was flapping over the quarter; there were hands aloft, reaving new halyards, and busily employed about the mast-head, as if it were crippled. "We have had fighting enough for one bout," said Captain Rose;"

"we must run for it now." Our main-top-gallant mast was hanging over the side, and our sails were riddled with the schooner's shot; she had evidently been firing high, to disable us, that she might carry us by boarding. We clapped on all the sail we could, served out grog to the men, and lay down at our quarters. We were not suffered to remain at peace long: the moment the schooner perceived our intention, she edged away after us, and having repaired her damage, set her main-sail again; and, as the wind was still light, with the assistance of her remaining sweeps, came crawling up again in-shore of us. "Scoundrels!" muttered the captain, "they will stick to us like leeches as long as there is a drop of blood left on board."

Again we saw the flash of her gun, and the smoke curling white in the moonbeam. The shot told with fatal effect; our main-top-sail-yard creaked, bent, and snapped in the slings, falling forward in two pieces.

The loud cheers of the pirate crew came faintly over the water; but our brave fellows, nothing daunted, responded to them heartily.

"They have winged us, my lads!" said our gallant captain; "but we will die game at all events." The men answered him with another cheer, and swore they would go to the bottom rather than yield. We blazed away at the schooner, but in vain; she had been severely taught to respect us; our shot fell far short, while she, with her long metal, kept dropping shot after shot into us with deadly precision. We tried to close with her; but she saw her advantage, and kept it; all that we could do was to stand steadily on, the men lying down under the shelter of the bulwarks. A faint dull sound now fell upon our ears, like the report of a distant gun. "Thank heaven!" said I, "our guns have spoken to some purpose; some of the cruisers have taken the alarm." We immediately burnt a blue light, and threw up a couple of rockets. In a few

minutes a shout of joy burst from the crew; a small glimmering star appeared in the distance, which flickered for a moment, and then increased to a strong, steady, glaring light; at the same time, we heard a second report, much nearer and clearer than before. Alarmed at the near approach of the stranger, which was now distinctly visible, standing towards us under a press of sail, the pirate, determined to have another brush with us, bore up, and closed with us. But we were prepared for him; he was evidently staggered by our warm reception; and, giving us a parting broadside, hove round, stood in under the dark shadow of the land, and we soon lost sight of him.

The stranger proved to be H.M. sloop Porcupine. She hove to when she neared us, and sent a boat on board. She had heard the report of our guns, and hastened to the scene of action, just in the very nick of time to save us. The lieutenant complimented the captain and crew on their gallant defence, and hastened on board the sloop again, to make his report. The boat soon returned, with a gang of hands to assist in repairing our damages; and on the evening of the next day, we were safely at anchor. When the excitement of the action was over, the pain of my wounds and the agitation of my mind brought on a violent attack of fever. During my delirium, the vision of my dying brother was ever before me; and in my madness I twice made an attempt upon my own life. At length the goodness of my constitution triumphed over the violence of my disorder; but my peace of mind was gone for ever. My worthy friend, the captain, to whom I confided my story, did everything in his power to rouse me from my sorrow, and to reconcile me to myself; but in vain. The sight of my brother had recalled the vivid recollection of by-gone scenes, which I had been for years steeling my heart to forget; my spirit was broken, I became listless and indifferent, and no longer felt any interest in my profession.

I did my duty, to be sure; but it was mechanically—from the force of habit. Captain Rose was ceaseless in his kindness. When, on our return home, I expressed my determination not to go to sea again, he represented my conduct during the action, and on other occasions, in such glowing terms, to the owners, that they settled a small annuity upon me, in consideration of the wounds I had received in their service. It was with the deepest regret I took leave of my worthy friend and captain.

"I can never forget," said he, "that, but for you, my children would have been fatherless, my wife a widow; whenever you need the assistance of a friend, Douglas, apply to me with as much confidence as to a brother."

He then offered to evince his regard in a more substantial manner, which I firmly but gratefully declined. I wrote to him afterwards, telling him that I had settled in this neighbourhood, and requesting him to make arrangements that my annuity might be made payable to a certain firm in Glasgow. In reply, he wrote me a long and affectionate letter. It was the first and last I ever had from him; he died soon afterwards. It is now five years since I took up my abode here, and I feel the weakness and infirmities of age creeping fast upon me. Oh! how happily will I lay down the weary load of life!"

"Douglas," said I, when he had finished his story, "you certainly have had grievous sorrows and trials; but you have borne them nobly, except in wilfully attaching the odium of crime to the unfortunate circumstances of your brother's death."

"Would that I could think as you do!" said he.

We parted; and four years elapsed before we met again. I had, in the meantime, commenced practice as a surgeon in Glasgow, and my professional avocations kept me too constantly employed to allow of my leaving the town. At last, after a severe attack of illness, I was recommended

to go to the sea-side for a few months; and my thoughts immediately recurred to my old friend. I took a lodging in Rothesay, and next morning went down to the beach, where I saw the old man just preparing to put off.

"Here I am again, Douglas," said I.

"Sir!" replied he, looking at me at first doubtingly, for illness had greatly reduced me. "Ah! Mr. Stewart, is that you? I thought you had forgotten me."

"Then you did me injustice, Douglas; I have often and often regretted that the pressure of business prevented my visiting you again. By the by, I was reminded of you in rather an extraordinary way lately."

"How was that, sir?"

"On my way down here, a few days since, the steamer touched at Greenock. I was standing on the quay when a poor fellow, a passenger in a vessel just arrived, fell from the gangway, and was taken up insensible. I immediately bled him; and, seeing that he appeared to be seriously injured, I determined, as I had no other particular call upon my time, to remain beside him till he recovered. I had him carried to a small lodging in the neighbourhood, where he soon partially recovered; and, having prescribed for him, I left him, desiring that I might be sent for if any change took place. During the night he had a violent attack of fever. I was sent for; when I arrived, I found him delirious; he was raving about Cuba, and ships, and pirates, and fifty other things that immediately recalled you to my remembrance. When he came to his senses again—

"'Doctor! tell me the truth,' said he: 'am I not dying?'

"'No,' replied I; 'your present symptoms are favourable; everything depends upon your keeping your mind and body quiet.'

"'Quiet mind!' muttered he, with a bitter smile on

his countenance. 'It is not that I fear death, doctor; I think I could willingly depart in peace, if I had but been allowed time to find the person whom I came to Scotland in search of.'

"'And who is that?'

"'A fisherman at Rothesay.'

"He mentioned the name; but at this moment I forget it. Let me see—it was—ay, it was Ponsonby—Charles Ponsonby."

Douglas started, and turned pale.

"Ponsonby!" exclaimed he; "that was *my* name, my father's name! Who can he be? Perhaps some old shipmate of poor Harry's. I will go directly and see him." And he turned as if to depart.

"Gently, gently, my friend," said I, detaining him; "I must go with you. When I left the poor fellow under the charge of a medical man at Greenock, he was greatly better; but he had received some severe internal injury, and he cannot live long. A sudden surprise might hasten his death. I must go with you to prevent accidents."

We went on board the next steamer that started, and in two hours we landed at Greenock. I led the way to the small lodging in which I had left my patient; and leaving Douglas at the door, went in to inquire into the state of the sufferer's health, and to prepare him for his visitor. I found him asleep; but his was not the slumber that refreshes—the restless and unquiet spirit within was disturbing the rest of the fevered and fatigued body. His flushed cheek lay upon one arm, while his other was every now and then convulsively raised above his head, and his lips moved with indistinct mutterings.

"He is asleep," said I to Douglas; "we must wait till he awakens."

"Oh, let me look at him," said he; "it can do no harm. He must be an old shipmate of poor Harry's; perhaps he has some memento of him for me."

"Very well," said I; "you may come in; but make as little noise as possible."

We walked up gently to the bed; Douglas looked earnestly at the sleeper, and, suddenly raising his clasped hands, he exclaimed—

"Merciful heaven! it is Henry himself!"

The poor patient started with a wild and fevered look.

"Who called me? I thought I heard Charles' voice! Where am I? Give way in the boat!—oh, spare me, spare me, Charles!—Fire!—Down with them! Hurra!"—And, waving his hands above his head, he sunk down again on his bed, exhausted.

He soon fell into a deep slumber, which lasted for some hours. I was sitting by his bedside when he awoke.

"How do you feel now?" said I.

"O doctor! I am dying. I have been dreaming: I thought I heard the voice of one I have deeply injured—nay, I dreamt I *saw* him; but changed, how changed!—and I—I have been the cause of it."

Here he was interrupted by the smothered sobs of poor Douglas, or Charles, as I now must call him.

"Who is that? there is somebody else in the room," said he; and, drawing the curtain aside, he saw his brother. "Then it was no dream! O Charles!" and, turning round, he buried his face in the pillow. Douglas sprang forward, and, throwing himself on the bed, gave way to a violent burst of emotion.

"Henry! dear Henry! look at me—it *is* your brother, Henry!"

The dying man groaned. "I cannot look you in the face, Charles," said he, "till you say you have forgiven me."

"Forgiven you!" replied the other; "bless you! bless you, Henry! if you did but know the load of remorse that the sight of you has relieved me from! Thank heaven, I was *not* your murderer!"

"And can you forget the past, Charles?" said Henry. "Do not my ears deceive me? Do you really forgive me?"

"Freely, fully, from my heart!" was the reply; "the joy of meeting you again, even thus, repays me for all I have suffered."

"O Charles!" again ejaculated Henry, "you were always generous and forgiving; but this is more than I expected from you."

I was now going to leave the room; but my patient, noticing my intention, begged me to remain.

"Stay, doctor, and listen to my confession; concealment is no longer necessary, for I feel that the hand of death is upon me, and that, in a few short hours, my career of sin, and shame, and sorrow, will be at an end."

"My poor fellow," said I, "I have heard the first part of your story from your brother; you had better defer the remainder till you have recovered from your present agitation; I will come again to-morrow."

"To-morrow, sir!" said he; where may I be before to-morrow? Oh, let me speak now, while time and strength are allowed. It will do me good, sir; it will relieve my mind, and be a comfort to my troubled spirit."

Feeling that he was right, I seated myself, while he thus commenced his tale:—

"You remember, Charles, our last sad parting—when we stood"——

"Mention it not, Harry!" groaned his brother—"there is agony in the recollection. Poor Julia!"

"When I left you, I was maddened with sorrow and remorse; all night long I wandered about in a state of distraction, and, when morning dawned, I fell down by the roadside, overcome with fatigue and misery. How long I lay I know not; when I awoke, the sun was high in the heaven; and, during one brief moment of forgetfulness, I

rejoiced in his brightness. Alas! it was but for a moment; my guilty love, my treachery, my loss, all flashed upon my mind at once, and I started to my feet, and hurried madly onwards, as if I hoped, by the rapidity of my movements, to escape from my own thoughts. Hunger at last compelled me to enter a small public-house, where I fell in with a poor sailor, who was on his way to Liverpool in search of a ship. The sight of this man turned my thoughts into another channel. 'Double-dyed traitor that I am,' muttered I, 'England is no longer a home for me. She for whose love I broke a father's heart and betrayed a brother's confidence, has been torn from me; and what more have I to live for here?' My mind was made up.

"'My lad,' said I to the sailor, 'if you have no objection, we will travel together; I am bound to Liverpool myself.'

"'With all my heart,' said he; 'I like to sail in company.'

"I engaged to work my passage out before the mast, in a ship bound to Jamaica, intending to turn my education to some account there if possible, or, at all events, to remain there as long as my money lasted. When I saw the shores of my native land sink in the distance, I felt that I was a forlorn and miserable outcast—that the last link was severed that bound me to existence. A dark change came over me; a spirit of desperation and reckless indifference; a longing wish to end my miseries at once. I strove against the evil spirit; and for a while succeeded. On our arrival at Kingston, I endeavoured in vain to obtain employment; my stock of money was fast decreasing; and when that was gone, where was I to turn for more? Poverty and wretchedness threatened me from without; remorse was busy within. 'Why should I bear this weary load of life?' said I, as I madly paced the shore, 'when one bold plunge would bury it for ever?'

"I threw myself headlong into the water; and, though

an excellent swimmer, I resolutely kept my face beneath the surface; yes, with desperate determination, I strove to *force* myself into the presence of that dread Being whom I had so grievously offended. When I came to my senses again, I was lying on a part of the beach I was unacquainted with; a tall, handsome, dark-featured young man, was bending over me, and, within a few yards of where I lay, a small light boat was drawn up on the shore.

"'So you have opened your eyes at last, my friend,' said the man; 'you have had a narrow squeak for it. When I dragged you out of the water, like a drowned rat, I thought all was over with you. Have you as many lives as a cat that you can afford to throw away *one* in such a foolish manner?'

"'Life! I am sick of it,' answered I.

"'Well,' said he, 'if that is the case, why not throw it away like a man, among men? Come with me, and I will furnish you with active employment to drive the devil out of your mind. But here, before we start, take some of the cordial to cheer you.'

"I was chilled and exhausted, and took a hearty draught. I felt its warmth steal through my frame—it mounted to my brain—I laughed aloud; I felt that I was equal to any act of desperation. Alas! I little knew the snare I was falling into. We launched the boat and sprang into it; and my companion, seizing the oars, pulled rapidly along the beach. After rowing some distance, we saw a light glimmering amid the bushes; it was now nearly dusk; my companion lay on his oars, and gave a long, low, peculiar whistle, which was immediately answered. He then ran the boat ashore; two men sprang in, who relieved him at the oars; and we again he'd on our way. There was a great deal of conversation carried on in a low tone; and from what I heard of it, half tipsy as I was, I inferred that my companion, whom the other men ad-

dressed with great respect, was a naval officer on some secret duty. Just as we were crossing the mouth of a narrow creek, a light four-oared gig dashed out after us, a voice hailed us in English to lie on our oars, and, when we still held on our course, a musket ball whizzed over us, to enforce obedience.

"'The piratical rascals!' exclaimed the young man; 'if they lay hold of us, we are all dead men.' 'Here!' continued he, seizing a musket, which lay in the stern sheets, and giving me another, fire for your life!'

"I was half mad with fever, and the effects of my late draught; and, under the persuasion that our lives were in danger, I fired. The bowman of the gig fell, and we rapidly left her. We came at last to a narrow lagune, close to the low shore of which lay a small schooner at anchor, with sails bent, and every preparation for a start.

"'Welcome on board the little Spitfire, my man!' said the young stranger; 'we want hands—will you ship?'

"'What colours do you sail under,' replied I.

"'Oh, not particular to a shade,' said he; 'any that happens to suit us for the time being: black is rather a favourite.'

"'Black!' exclaimed I; 'I thought you were king's men. I won't go with you.'

"'It is too late, my lad—go you must! Besides, there is no safety for you on shore now; you shot one of the crew of the cruiser's gig, and they will have life for life, depend upon it.'

"The whole horror of my situation now burst upon me. I was in a fearful strait; but I made up my mind at once, to deceive the pirates, by appearing to be contented with my situation, and to take advantage of the first opportunity that presented itself to escape.

"'Well,' said I, 'if that's the case, I had better die fighting bravely like a man, than hang like a dog from the yard-arm of a man-of-war.'

"'Bravely said, my hearty!' replied the young leader; 'but we must be moving—the blue jackets will be after us; that shot of yours will bring the whole hornet's nest about our ears.'

"We got under way; and, after rounding the east end of Jamaica, we stood away for the Cuba shore. The very first time we came to an anchor, I made an attempt to escape; I had saved part of my provisions for some days before, and concealed it, in readiness to take with me. We were lying close to the shore, and the darkness of the night would, I thought, conceal my movements; I was just slipping over the schooner's side, to swim ashore, when I felt a touch upon my shoulder, and, turning round, a dark lantern flashed in my face, and I saw the young pirate standing beside me. He held a cocked pistol to my head. 'One touch of this trigger,' said he, 'and you would require no more looking after. My eye has been upon you all along; you cannot escape me; do not attempt it again—the consequences may be fatal.'

"From that hour I was aware that I was constantly and narrowly watched. Except in the one instance of the gig's man, whom I had fired at under a delusion, it was my good fortune as yet to have escaped imbruing my hands in blood. During the action with the Albion, I was sent in the boat, under the particular charge of the mate. 'Keep your eye on this fellow,' said the captain; 'If he flinches for a moment, blow his brains out instantly; we must *glue him* to us with blood. I will keep her in play till you creep alongside; and, once on board, cut every one down before you—give no quarter.'

"My blood ran cold at this horrible order, and I determined upon doing all in my power to counteract its execution. I was delighted when you discovered our approach and the blue light flashed from your stern; for I dreaded the scene of massacre that must have ensued, if we had

boarded you unawares. I sprang on deck with the rest, in hopes that I might be able to prevent some bloodshed; but, when I was violently attacked, my passions were aroused, and I fought desperately for my life. Just as you tumbled me over the gangway, the gleam of moonshine showed me your face. I recognised you immediately; and, when I rose to the surface of the water again after my plunge, I blessed heaven that I had been spared the guilt of murder. I reached the boat which was still hanging under your quarter, cut the painter, and in the confusion, escaped unnoticed. I immediately made for the shore; and after many hair-breadth escapes from my old associates, I volunteered on board one of the cruisers on the Jamaica station. At length she returned home, the crew were paid off, and I determined to seek you out. On inquiring at the office of the owners of the Albion, in Liverpool, they told me that the late chief mate had settled, some years before, in the neighbourhood of Rothesay, in the Isle of Bute, and was still alive. Thank heaven! I have found you at last! I should like to live, Charles, to prove to you my sorrow and repentance for the past; but, as heaven has willed it otherwise, the blessed assurance of your forgiveness will lighten death of half its terrors."

The poor fellow breathed his last a few days afterwards. Douglas mourned long and deeply for his brother's death; but after time had soothed his grief, he became quite an altered man. His mind and spirits recovered their elasticity, after the load which had so long weighed them down was removed. He did not resume his own name; but lived many years afterwards, contented and happy, in the humble station of a fisherman; and it was not till after his death that his old companions discovered how justly the name of "Gentleman Douglas" had been applied to him. His tombstone bore the simple inscription, "Charles

Douglas Ponsonby, eldest son of the late Reverend T. Ponsonby."

I often wander, in the calm summer evenings, to the quiet churchyard, and return a sadder, but, I hope, a better man, after meditating upon the troublous and adventurous life, and peaceful and Christian death of the ROTHESAY FISHERMAN.

LEAVES

FROM

THE DIARY OF AN AGED SPINSTER.

THE poet of THE ELEGY *par excellence*, hath written two lines, which run thus—

> "Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

Now, I never can think of these lines but they remind me of the tender, delicate, living, breathing, and neglected flowers that bud, blossom, shed their leaves, and die, in cold unsunned obscurity—flowers that were formed to shed their fragrance around a man's heart, and to charm his eye—but which, though wandering melancholy and alone in the wilderness where they grow, he passeth by with neglect, making a companion of his loneliness. But, to drop all metaphor—where will you find a flower more interesting than a spinster of threescore and ten, of sixty, of fifty, or of forty? They have, indeed, "wasted their sweetness on the desert air." Some call them "old maids;" but it is a malicious appellation, unless it can be proved that they have refused to be wives. I would always take the part of a spinster; they are a peculiar people, far more "sinned against than sinning." Every blockhead thinks himself at liberty to crack a joke upon them; and when he says something, that he conceives to be wondrous smart, about Miss Such-an-One and her cat or poodle dog, he conceives himself a marvellous clever fellow; yea, even

those of her own sex who are below what is called a "certain age" (what that age is, I cannot tell), think themselves privileged to giggle at the expense of their elder sister. Now, though there may be a degree of peevishness (and it is not to be wondered at) amongst the sisterhood, yet with them you will find the most sensitive tenderness of heart, a delicacy that quivers, like the aspen leaf, at a breath, and a kindliness of soul that a mother might envy—or rather, for envy, shall I not write *imitate?* But ah! if their history were told, what a chronicle would it exhibit of blighted affections, withered hearts, secret tears, and midnight sighs!

The first spinster of whom I have a particular remembrance, as belonging to her caste, was Diana Darling. It is now six and twenty years since Diana paid the debt of nature, up to which period, and for a few years before, she rented a room in Chirnside. It was only a year or two before her death that I became acquainted with her; and I was then very young. But I never shall forget her kindness towards me. She treated me as though I had been her own child, or rather her grandchild, for she was then very little under seventy years of age. She had always an air of gentility about her; people called her "a betterish sort o' body." And, althoug *Miss* and *Mistress* are becoming general appellations now, twenty or thirty years ago, upon the Borders, those titles were only applied to particular persons or on particular occasions; and whether their more frequent use now is to be attributed to the schoolmaster being abroad or the dancing-master being abroad, I cannot tell, but Diana Darling, although acknowledged to be a "betterish sort o' body," never was spoken of by any other term but "auld Diana," or "auld Die." Well do I remember her flowing chintz gown, with short sleeves, her snow-white apron, her whiter cap, and old kid gloves, reaching to her elbows; and as well do I remember

how she took one of the common *blue cakes* which washer-women use, and tying it up in a piece of woollen cloth, dipped it in water, and daubed it round and round the walls of her room, to give them the appearance of being papered. I have often heard of and seen *stenciling* since; but, rude as the attempt was, I am almost persuaded that Diana was the first who put it in practice. To keep up gentility putteth people to strange shifts, and often to ridiculous ones—and to both of these extremities she was driven. But I have hinted that she was a kind-hearted creature; and, above all, do I remember her for the fine old ballads which she sang to me. But there was one that was an especial favourite with her, and a verse of which, if I remember correctly, ran thus—

> "Fie, Lizzy Lindsay!
> Sae lang in the mornins ye lie,
> Mair fit ye was helping yer minny
> To milk a' the ewes and the kye."

Diana, however, was a woman of some education; and to a relative she left a sort of history of her life, from which the following is an extract:—

"My father died before I was eighteen (so began Diana's narrative), and he left five of us—that is, my mother, two sisters, a brother, and myself—five hundred pounds a-piece. My sisters were both younger than me; but, within six years after our father's death, they both got married; and my brother, who was only a year older than myself, left the house also, and took a wife, so that there was nobody but me and my mother left. Everybody thought there was something very singular in this; for it was not natural that the youngest should be taken and the auldest left; and, besides, it was acknowledged that I was the best faured,* and the best tempered in the family; and there

* Best-looking, or most beautiful.

could be no dispute but that my siller was as good as theirs.

I must confess, however, that, when I was but a lassie o' sixteen, I had drawn up wi' one James Laidlaw—but I should score out the word *one*, and just say that I had drawn up wi' *James Laidlaw*. He was a year, or maybe three, aulder than me, and I kenned him when he was just a laddie, at Mr. Wh—'s school in Dunse; but I took no notice o' him then in particular, and, indeed, I never did, until one day that I was an errand down by Kimmerghame, and I met James just coming out frae the gardens. It was the summer season, and he had a posie in his hand, and a very bonny posie it was. 'Here's a fine day, Diana,' says he. 'Yes, it is,' says I.

So we said nae mair for some time; but he keepit walking by my side, and at last he said—'What do ye think o' this posie?' 'It is very bonny, James,' said I. 'I think sae,' quoth he; 'and if ye will accept it, there should naebody be mair welcome to it.' 'Ou, I thank ye,' said I, and I blushed in a way—'why should ye gie me it?' 'Never mind,' says he, 'tak it for auld acquaintance sake—we were at the school together.'

So I took the flowers, and James keepit by my side, and cracked to me a' the way to my mother's door, and I cracked to him—and I really wondered that the road between Kimmerghame and Dunse had turned sae short. It wasna half the length that it used to be, or what I thought it ought to be.

But I often saw James Laidlaw after this; and somehow or other I aye met him just as I was coming out o' the kirk, and weel do I recollect that, one Sabbath in particular, he said to me—'Diana, will ye no come out and tak a walk after ye get your dinner?' 'I dinna ken, James,' says I; 'I doubt I daurna, for our folk are very particular, and baith my faither and my mother are terribly against ony-

thing like gaun about stravaigin on the Sundays.' 'Oh, they need never ken where ye're gaun,' says he. 'Weel, I'll try,' says I, for by this time I had a sort o' liking for James. 'Then,' said he, 'I'll be at the Penny Stane at four o'clock.' 'Very weel,' quoth I.

And, although baith my faither and mother said to me, as I was gaun out—'Where are ye gaun, lassie?'—'Oh, no very far,' said I; and, at four o'clock, I met James at the Penny Stane. I shall never forget the grip that he gied my hand when he took it in his, and said—

'Ye hae been as good as your word, Diana.'

We wandered awa doun by Wedderburn dyke, till we came to the Blackadder, and then we sauntered down by the river side, till we were opposite Kelloe—and, oh, it was a pleasant afternoon. Everything round about us, aboon us, and among our feet, seemed to ken it was Sunday—everything but James and me. The laverock was singing in the blue lift—the blackbirds were whistling in the hedges—the mavis chaunted its loud sang frae the bushes on the braes—the lennerts* were singing and chirming among the whins—and the shelfa† absolutely seemed to follow ye wi' its three notes over again, in order that ye might learn them.

It was the happiest afternoon I ever spent. James grat, and I grat. I got a scolding frae my faither and my mother when I gaed hame, and they demanded to ken where I had been; but the words that James had spoken to me bore me up against their reproaches.

Weel, it was very shortly (I daresay not six months after my faither's death), that James called at my mother's, and as he said, to bid us *farewell!* He took my mother's hand—I mind I saw him raise it to his lips, while the tears were on his cheeks; and he was also greatly put about to part wi' my sisters; but to me he said—

* Linnets † Chaffinch

'Ye'll set me down a bit, Diana.'

He was to take the coach for Liverpool—or at least, a coach to take him on the road to that town, the next day; and from there he was to proceed to the West Indies, to meet an uncle who was to make him his heir.

I went out wi' him, and we wandered away down by our auld walks; but, oh, he said little, and he sighed often, and his heart was sad. But mine was as sad as his, and I could say as little as him. I winna, I canna write a' the words and the vows that passed. He took the chain frae his watch, and it was o' the best gold, and he also took a pair o' Bibles frae his pocket, and he put the watch chain and the Bibles into my hand, and—'Diana,' said he, 'take these, dear—keep them for the sake o' your poor James, and, as often as ye see them, think on him.' I took them, and wi' the tears running down my cheeks—'O James,' cried I, 'this is hard!—hard!'

Twice, ay thrice, we bade each other '*farewell*,' and thrice, after he had parted frae me, he cam running back again, and, throwing his arms round my neck, cried—

'Diana! I canna leave ye!—promise me that ye will never marry onybody else!'

And thrice I promised him that I wouldna.

But he gaed awa, and my only consolation was looking at the Bibles, on one o' the white leaves o' the first volume o' which I found written, by his own hand, '*James Laidlaw and Diana Darling vowed, that, if they were spared, they would become man and wife; and that neither time, distance, nor circumstances, should dissolve their plighted troth. Dated, May 25th*, 17—.'

These were cheering words to me; and I lived on them for years, even after my younger sisters were married, and I had ceased to hear from him. And, during that time, for his sake, I had declined offers which my friends said I was waur than foolish to reject. At least half a

dozen good matches I let slip through my hands, and a' for the love o' James Laidlaw who was far awa, and the vows he had plighted to me by the side o' the Blackadder. And, although he hadna written to me for some years, I couldna think that ony man could be so wicked as to write words o' falsehood and bind them up in the volume o' everlasting truth.

But, about ten years after he had gane awa, James Laidlaw came back to our neighbourhood; but he wasna the same lad he left—for he was now a dark-complexioned man, and he had wi' him a mulatto woman, and three bairns that called him *faither!* He was no longer my James!

My mother was by this time dead, and I expected naething but that the knowledge o' his faithlessness would kill me too—for I had clung to hope till the last straw was broken.

I met him once during his stay in the country, and, strange to tell, it was within a hundred yards o' the very spot where I first foregathered wi' him, when he offered me the posie.

'Ha! Die!' said he, 'my old girl, are you still alive? I'm glad to see you. Is the old woman, your mother, living yet?' I was ready to faint, my heart throbbed as though it would have burst. A' the trials I had ever had were naething to this; and he continued—'Why, if I remember right, there was once something like an old flame between you and me.' 'O James! James!' said I, 'do you remember the words ye wrote in the Bible, and the vows that ye made me by the side of the Blackadder?' 'Ha! ha!' said he, and he laughed, 'you are there, are you? I do mind something of it. But, Die, I did not think that a girl like you would have been such a fool as to remember what a boy said to her.'

I would have spoken to him again; but I remembered

he was the husband of another woman—though she was a mulatto—an' I hurried away as fast as my fainting heart would permit. I had but one consolation, and that was, that, though he had married another, naebody could compare her face wi' mine.

But it was lang before I got the better o' this sair slight —ay, I may say it was ten years and mair; and I had to try to pingle and find a living upon the interest o' my five hundred pounds, wi' ony other thing that I could turn my hand to in a genteel sort o' way.

I was now getting on the wrang side o' eight and thirty; and that is an age when it isna prudent in a spinister to be throwing the pouty side o' her lip to any decent lad that hauds out his hand, and says—'Jenny, will ye tak me?' Often and often, baith by day and by night, did I think o' the good bargains I had lost, for the sake o' my fause James Laidlaw; and often, when I saw some o' them that had come praying to me, pass me on a Sunday, having their wives wi' their hands half round their waist on the horse behint them—'O James! fause James!' I have said, 'but for trusting to you, and it would hae been me that would this day been riding behint Mr. ——.'

But I had still five hundred pounds, and sic fend as I could make, to help what they brought to me. And, about this time, there was one that had the character of being a very respectable sort o' a lad, one Walter Sanderson; he was a farmer, very near about my own age, and altogether a most prepossessing and intelligent young man. I first met wi' him at my youngest sister's goodman's kirn,* and I must say, a better or a more graceful dancer I never saw upon a floor. He had neither the jumping o' a mountebank, nor the sliding o' a play-actor, but there was an ease in his carriage which I never saw equalled. I was particularly struck wi' him, and especially his dancing; and it

* Harvest Home.

so happened that he was no less struck wi' me. I thought he looked even better than James Laidlaw used to do—but at times I had doubts about it. However, he had stopped all the night at my brother-in-law's as weel as mysel; and when I got up to gang hame the next day, he said he would bear me company. I thanked him, and said I was obliged to him, never thinking that he would attempt such a thing. But, just as the pony was brought out for me to ride on (and the callant was to come up to Dunse for it at night), Mr. Walter Sanderson mounted his horse, and says he—

'Now, wi' your permission, Miss Darling, I will see you hame.'

It would hae been very rude o' me to hae said—'No, I thank you, sir,' and especially at my time o' life, wi' twa younger sisters married that had families; so I blushed, as it were, and giein my powny a twitch, he sprang on to his saddle, and came trotting along by my side. He was very agreeable company; and, when he said, 'I shall be most happy to pay you a visit, Miss Darling,' I didna think o' what I had said, until after that I had answered him, 'I shall be very happy to see ye, sir.' And when I thought o' it my very cheek bones burned wi' shame.

But, howsoever, Mr. Sanderson was not long in calling again—and often he did call, and my sisters and their guidmen began to jeer me about him. Weel, he called and called, for I daresay as good as three quarters of a year; and he was sae backward and modest a' the time that I thought him a very remarkable man; indeed, I began to think him every way superior to James Laidlaw.

But at last he made proposals—I consented—the wedding-day was set, and we had been cried in the kirk. It was the fair day, just two days before we were to be married, and he came into the house, and, after he had been seated a while, and cracked in his usual kind way—

'Oh,' says he, 'what a bargain I hae missed the day! There are four lots o' cattle in the market, and I might hae cleared four hundred pounds, cent. per cent., by them.'

'Losh me! Walter, then,' says I, 'why didna ye do it? How did ye let sic a bargain slip through your fingers?'

'Woman,' said he, 'I dinna ken; but a man that is to be married within eight and forty hours is excusable. I came to the Fair without any thought o' either buying or selling—but just to see you, Diana—and I kenned there wasna meikle siller necessary for that.'

'Losh, Walter, man,' said I, 'but that is a pity—and ye say ye could mak cent. per cent. by the beasts?'

''Deed could I,' quoth he—'I am sure o' that.'

'Then, Walter,' says I, 'what is mine the day is to be yours the morn, I may say; and it would be a pity to lose sic a bargain.'

Therefore I put into his hands an order on a branch bank, that had been established in Dunse, for every farthing that I was worth in the world, and Walter kissed me, and went out to get the money frae the bank and buy the cattle.

But he hadna been out an hour, when ane o' my brothers-in-law called, and I thought he looked unco dowie. So I began to tell him about the excellent bargain that Walter had made, and what I had done. But the man started frae his seat as if he were crazed, and, without asking me ony questions, he only cried—'Gracious! Diana! hae ye been sic an idiot?' and, rushing out o' the house, ran to the bank.

He left me in a state that I canna describe; I neither kenned what to do nor what to think. But within half an hour he returned, and he cried out as he entered—'Diana, ye are ruined! He has taken in you and everybody else. The villain broke yesterday. He is off! Ye may bid fareweel to your siller!' 'Wha is off?' cried I, and I was in

sic a state I was hardly able to speak. 'Walter Sanderson!' answered my brother-in-law.

I believe I went into hysterics; for the first thing I mind o' after his saying so, was a dozen people standing round about me—some slapping at the palms o' my hands, and others laving water on my breast and temples, until they had me as wet as if they had douked me in Pollock's Well.

I canna tell how I stood up against this clap o' misery. It was near getting the better o' me. For a time I really hated the very name and the sight o' man, and I said, as the song says, that

Men are a' deceivers.'

But this was not the worst o' it—I had lost my all, and I was now forced into the acquaintanceship of poverty and dependence. I first went to live under the roof o' my youngest sister, who had always been my favourite; but, before six months went round, I found that she began to treat me just as though I had been a servant, ordering me to do this and do the other; and sometimes my dinner was sent ben to me into the kitchen; and the servant lassies, seeing how their mistress treated me, considered that they should be justified in doing the same—and they did the same. Many a weary time have I lain down upon my bed and wished never to rise again, for my spirit was weary o' this world. But I put up wi' insult after insult, until flesh and blood could endure it no longer. Then did I go to my other sister, and she hardly opened her mouth to me as I entered her house. I saw that I might gang where I liked—I wasna welcome there. Before I had been a week under her roof, I found that the herd's dog led a lady's life to mine. I was forced to leave her too.

And, as a sort o' last alternative, just to keep me in existence, I began a bit shop in a neighbouring town, and took in sewing and washing; and, after I had tried them

awhile, and found that they would hardly do, I commenced a bit school, at the advice of the minister's wife, and learned bairns their letters and the catechism, and knitting and sewing. I also taught them (for they were a' girls) how to work their samplers, and to write, and to cast accounts. But what vexed and humbled me more than all I had suffered, was, that one night, just after I had let my scholars away, an auld hedger and ditcher body, almost sixty years o' age, came into the house, and 'How's a' wi' ye the nicht?' says he, though I had never spoken to the man before. But he took off his bonnet, and, pulling in a chair, drew a seat to the fire. I was thunderstruck! But I was yet mair astonished and ashamed, when the auld body, sleeking down his hair and his chin, had the assurance to make love to me!

'There is the door, sir!' cried I. And when he didna seem willing to understand me, I gripped him by the shouthers, and showed him what I meant.

Yet quite composedly he turned round to me and said, 'I dinna see what is the use o' the like o' this—it is true I am aulder than you, but you are at a time o' life now that ye canna expect ony young man to look at ye. Therefore, ye had better think twice before ye turn me to the door. Ye will find it just as easy a life being the wife o' a hedger as keeping a school—rather mair sae I apprehend, and mair profitable too.' I had nae patience wi' the man. I thought my sisters had insulted me; but this offer o' the hedger's wounded me mair than a' that they had done.

'O James Laidlaw!' cried I, when I was left to mysel, 'what hae ye brought me to! My sisters dinna look after me. My parting wi' them has gien them an excuse to forget that I exist. My brother is far frae me, and he is ruled by a wife; and I hae been robbed by another o' the little that I had. I am like a withered tree in a wilderness, standing its lane—I will fa' and naebody will miss me. I

am sick, and there are none to haud my head. My throat is parched and my lips dry, and there are none to bring me a cup o' water. There is nae *living thing* that I can ca' mine. And some day I shall be found a stiffened corpse in my bed, with no one near me to close my eyes in death or perform the last office of humanity! For I am alone—I am by myself—I am forgotten in the world; and my latter years, if I have a long life, will be a burden to strangers.' "

But Diana Darling did not so die. Her gentleness, her kindness, caused her to be beloved by many who knew not her history; and, when the last stern messenger came to call her hence, many watched with tears around her bed of death, and many more in sorrow followed her to the grave. So ran the few leaves in the diary of a spinster—and the reader will forgive our interpolations.

GEORDIE WILLISON,

AND THE HEIRESS OF CASTLE GOWER.

Antiquaries know very well that one of the oldest of the Nova Scotia knights, belonging to Scotland, was Sir Marmaduke Maitland of Castle Gower, situated in one of the southern counties of the kingdom; but they may not know so well that Sir Marmaduke held his property under a strict entail to heirs male, whom failing, to heirs female, under the condition of bearing the arms and name of the Castle Gower family; or that he was married to Catherine Maxwell, a near relative of the family of Herries, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright—a person of no very great beauty, but sprightly, and of good manners. This woman had been brought up in France, and was deeply tinged with French feelings. She had French cooks and French milliners about her in abundance; and a French lackey was considered by her as indispensable as meat and drink. Then she was represented as being a proud, imperious woman, with a bad temper; which was rendered worse by her continued fretting, in consequence of not having any children to her husband; whereby the property would go away to a son of her husband's brother. Sir Marmaduke and his lady had a town-house in Edinburgh, in which they lived for the greater part of the year, situated so as to look to the North Back of the Canongate, and with an entry to it from that street, but the principal gate was from the north side. A garden was attached to the house; and the stables and coach-houses were situated at the foot of the

garden. All these premises are now removed; but Sir Marmaduke Maitland's house—or, as it was styled, the Duke's house—at the period of this story, was a very showy house, and very well known to the inhabitants of Edinburgh.

Now, at the foot of Leith Wynd, there lived, about the same time, a poor widow woman, called Widow Willison, who had a son and a daughter. She was the widow of a William Willison, who earned a livelihood by the humble means of serving the inhabitants of Edinburgh with water, which he conveyed to their doors by the means of an ass; and was, in consequence, called Water Willie—a good, simple, honest creature; much liked by his customers, from whom he never wanted a good diet; and had no fault, but that of disliking the element in which he dealt. He liked he said very well to drive water to the great folks, and he wished them "meikle guid o't; but, for his ain pairt, he preferred whisky, which, he thocht, was o' a warmer and mair congenial nature, and better suited to the inside o' a rational animal, like man."

Strange enough, it was to William Willison's dislike to water that people attributed his death. It would have been more logical—but scandal is a bad logician—to have debited that event to the water; for, though it will not conceal that Willie was drunk when he died, it was as notorious that it was not because he was drunk that he died—but that he died because his water-cart went over him when he was drunk. However that may be, and there is no use in wasting much reasoning on the point, William left, at his death, a widow and two children, with nothing to support them.

Widow Willison was a good, religious woman, of the old school, believing in the transcendent influence of mere faith, as carrying along with it all the minor points of justification by works, election, and others, in the same way

that a river takes with it the drops of rain that fall from the heavens, and carries all down to the ocean. She was an excellent example of the influence of a pure religion—kind and generous in her sentiments; and, though left with two children, and no food to satisfy their hunger, patient and hopeful—placing implicit trust and confidence in the Author of all good, and viewing murmuring as a sin against His providence.

Let us introduce, now, George Willison, her son, an extraordinary individual, apparently destined to be more notorious than his father, in so much as his character was composed of that mixture of simplicity, bordering on silliness, and shrewd sagacity in the ordinary affairs of life, which is often observed in people of Scotland. Though common, the character is nearly inexplicable to the analyst; for the individual seems conscious of the weaker part of his character, but he appears to love it, and often makes it subservient to the stronger elements of his mind, by using it at once as a cloak and a foil to them. George, like the other individuals of his peculiar species, followed no trade. Sometimes he acted as a cadie, a letter-carrier, a messenger, a porter, a water-carrier—in any capacity, in short, in which he could, with no continuous labour, earn a little money. To work at any given thing for longer time than a day, was a task which he generally condemned, as being wearisome and monotonous, and more suited to the inferior animals than to man. His clothes, like his avocations, were many-coloured, and suited the silly half of his character, without altogether depriving him of the rights of a citizen, or making him the property and sport of school-boys. Like his employments, his earnings were chancy and various, ranging between a shilling to five shillings a-week, including gratuities, which his conceit prompted him to call "helps," with a view to avoid the imputation of living upon alms—a name, in the Scotch

language "awmous," which did not sound agreeably in the ears of Geordie Willison.

The very reverse of George was his sister—a black-eyed beauty, of great intelligence, who earned a little money, to support the family, by means of her needle. She was a great comfort to her mother, seldom going out, and felt much annoyed by the strange character of her brother, whom she often endeavoured to improve, with a view to his following some trade. He was twenty years of age, and if he did not "tak' himself up" now, she said, "he would be a vagrant a' his days." Geordie, on the other hand, quietly heard his sister, but he never saw—at least, he pretended not to see, which was the same thing—the force of her argument. The weak half of his constitution was always presented to any attack of logic; and the adroitness with which he met his opponent by this soft buckler—which, like a feather-bed presented to a canon bullet, swallowed the force and the noise at the same time—was worthy of Aristotle, or Thomas Scotus, or any other logical warrior Take an example:—

"Whar hae ye been the day, Geordie?" said his mother to him one day.

"I hae been convoying Sir Marmaduke Maitland a wee bit on his way to France," said Geordie. "He asked me to bear him company and carry his luggage to Leith, and I couldna refuse sic a favour to the braw knight."

"An' what got ye frae him?" said his mother; "for I hae naething i' the house for supper."

"Twa or three placks," said Geordie, throwing down some coppers on the table.

"This is the 21st day o' April—your birthday, Geordie," said the mother; "an' as it has aye been our practice to hae something by common on that occasion, I'll gang down to Widow Johnston's an' get a pint o' the best, to drink yer health wi'." And Widow Willison did as she said.

"Is Lady Maitland no awa wi' Sir Marmaduke, Geordie?" resumed his mother, when they were taking their meagre supper.

"Na! na!" said Geordie; "they dinna like ane anither sae weel; an' I dinna wonder at Sir Marmaduke no likin' her, for I dinna like her mysel."

"For what reason, Geordie?" asked his mother.

"Because she doesna like me," answered the casuist.

Now it happened that on the 19th day of February, after the conversation here detailed, that George Willison was wandering over the grounds of Warriston, on the north side of Edinburgh. He had been with a letter to the Laird of Warriston, and, in coming back, as was not uncommon with him, was musing, in a half dreaming, listless kind of state, as he sauntered through the planted grounds in the neighbourhood. His attention was in an instant arrested by the sounds of voices, and he stood, or rather sat down, behind a hedge and listened. The speakers were very near to him; for it was so very dark that they could not observe him.

"I will stand at a little distance, Louise," said a voice, "and thou canst do the thing thyself. I could despatch thine, but I cannot do that good work to myself; for the mother rises in me, and unnerves me quite. Besides, thou didst promise to do me this service for the ten gold pieces I gave thee, and the many more I will yet give thee."

"*Oui! oui!* my lady; but de infant is so *fort*, so trong, dat it will be difficult for me to trottle her. Death, *la mort*, does not come ever when required; but I vill do my endeavour to trangle de leetle jade, vit as much activity as I can. Ha! ha! de leetle baggage tinks she is already *perdir*—she tombles so—be quiet, you *petite* leetle deevil. It vill be de best vay, I tink, to do it on de ground. Hark! is dere not some person near?—my heart goes *en palpitant*."

"It is nobody, thou fool," answered the lady; "it is only

a rustling produced by a breath of wind among the trees."

"Very vell, very vell, my Lady Maitland; dat is right. Now for de vork."

"Stop until I am at a little distance; and, when thou hearest me cry 'Now,' finish the thing cleverly."

The rustling of the lady's gown betokened that she had done as she said. The rustling ceased; and the word "Now," came from the mouth of the mother.

All was silent for a minute; a quick breath, indicating the application of a strong effort, was now heard, mixed with the sound of a convulsed suspiration, something like that of a child labouring under hooping-cough, though weaker. The rustling of clothes indicated a struggle of some violence; and several ejaculations escaped at intervals: —"*Mon dieu!* dis is de *triste* vork; how trong de leetle she velp is!—now, now—not yet—how trange!—*diable!* she still breats!"

"Hast thou finished, Louise?" asked the lady, impatiently.

"Not yet, my lady," said Louise; give me your hair necklace; de leetle she velp vont die vitout tronger force dan my veak hands can apply."

"I cannot go to thee," said the lady; "thou must come to me. Lay the babe on the ground, and come for the necklace."

Louise did as she was desired.

The sounds of a struggle again commenced, mixed with Louise's ejaculations:—"Now, now—dis vill do for you—*une fois*—vonce, twice, trice round—dat vill do—quite sufficient to kill de giant, or Sir Marmaduke himself. Now, my lady, I tink de ting is pretty vell done; I vill trow her into de hedge—dere—now, let us go."

The two ladies went away, and Geordie rushed forward to the place where they had thrown the child. It was still

convulsed. He loosened the necklace, which had been left by mistake, and blew strongly into the child's mouth. He heard it sigh, and in a little time breathe; and, carrying it with the greatest care, he took it home with him to his mother's house.

"Whar hae ye been, man, and what is this ye hae in your airms?" said Widow Willison to Geordie, when he went in.

"It's a wee bit birdie I fand in a nest amang the hedges o' Warriston," said Geordie. "Its mither didna seem to care aboot it, and I hae brought it hame wi' me. Gie't a pickle crowdie, puir thing."

Astonished, and partly displeased, Widow Willison took the child out of her son's arms, and seeing its face swoln and blue, and marks of strangulation on its neck, her maternal sympathies arose, and she applied all the articles of a mother's pharmacopœia with a view to restore it.

"But whar got ye the bairn, man?" she again inquired. "Gie us nane o' yer nonsense about birds and hedges. Tell us the story sae as plain folk can understand it."

"I hae already tauld ye," said Geordie, dryly and slowly; "and it's no my intention at present to tell ye ony mair aboot it. Ye didna ask whar *I* came frae when ye got me first."

"An' wha's to bring up the bairn?" asked the mother, who knew it was in vain to put the same question twice to Geordie.

"Ye didna ask that question at my faither when *I* cam hame," replied the stoic, with one of his peculiar looks; "but, if ye had, maybe ye wadna hae got sae kind an answer as I'll gie ye: Geordie Willison will pay for bringing up the bairn; and I'll no answer ony mair o' yer questions."

Strictly did Geordie keep his word with his mother. He would tell neither her nor his sister anything about the child. They knew his temper and disposition, and gra-

dually resigned an importunity which had the effect of making him more obstinate. At night, when the child's clothes were taken off, with a view to putting it to bed, Geordie got hold of them and carried them off, unknown to his mother. He locked them up in his chest, and, in the morning, when his mother asked him if he had seen them, he said he knew nothing about them. Annoyed by this conduct on the part of her son, his mother threatened to throw the child upon the parish as a foundling; and yet, when she reflected on the extreme sagacity which was mixed up with her son's peculiarities, and read in his looks, which she well understood, a more than ordinary confidence of power to do what he had said, as to bringing up the child, she hesitated in her purpose, and at last resolved to go in with the humour and inclinations of her son, and do the duty of a mother to the babe.

We now change the scene.

"It's a braw day this, my Leddy Maitland," said Geordie, bowing to the very ground, and holding in his hand a clean sheet of paper, which he had folded up like a letter, as a passport to her ladyship's presence.

Lady Maitland, who was sitting at her work-table, stared at the person thus saluting her, and seeing it was Geordie Willison, who had offended her at the time of his carrying down Sir Marmaduke's luggage, by asking, jocularly, if "ony o' the bairns were gaun wi' their father," she asked him sternly what he wanted, and, thinking he had the letter in his hand to deliver to her, snatched it in a petted manner and opened it. On finding it a clean sheet of paper, with her address on the back of it, she got into a great rage, and ran to the bell to call up a lackey to kick Geordie down stairs.

"Canny, my braw leddy—canny," said Geordie, seizing her hand; "ye are hasty—maybe no quite recovered yet —the wet dews o' Warriston are no for the tender health

o' the bonny Leddy Maitland; for even Geordie Willison, wha can ban a' bield i' the cauldest nicht o' winter, felt them chill and gruesone as he passed through them yestreen."

On hearing this speech, Lady Maitland changed, in an instant, from a state of violent passion to the rigidity and appearance of a marble statue.

Eyeing her with one of his peculiar looks, as much as to say, "I know all," Geordie proceeded.

"I dinna want to put your leddyship to ony trouble by this veesit; but, being in want o' some siller in thir hard times, I thocht I would tak the liberty o' ca'in upon yer leddyship, as weel for the sake o' being better acquainted wi' a leddy o' yer station and presence, as for the sake o' gettin' the little I require on my first introduction to high life."

"How much money dost thou require?" asked the lady, with a tremulous voice.

"Twunty pund, my leddy, twenty pund at the present time," answered Geordie, with the same simple look; "ye ken the folk haud me for a natural, and ower fu' a cup is no easy carried, even by the wise. Sae, I wadna like to trust mysel' wi' mair than twenty pund at a time."

Without saying a word, Lady Maitland went, with trembling steps, and a hurried and confused manner, to her bureau: she took out her keys—tried one, then another, and, with some difficulty, at last got it opened. She counted out twenty pounds, and handed it over to Geordie, who counted it again with all the precision of a modern banker.

"Thank ye, my leddy," said Geordie; "an' whan I need mair, I'll just tak the liberty o' makin yer leddyship my banker. Guid day, my leddy." And, with a low bow, reaching nearly to the ground, he departed.

The result of this interview satisfied Geordie that what he had suspected was true. Sir Marmaduke had not yet

returned, and his lady, having been unfaithful to him, and given birth to a child, had resolved upon putting it out of the way, in the manner already detailed. He had no doubt that the lady thought the child was dead; and he did not wish, in the meantime, to disturb that notion; for, although he knew that the circumstance of the child being alive would give him greater power over her, in the event of her becoming refractory, he was apprehensive that she would not have allowed the child to remain in his keeping; and might, in all likelihood, resort to some desperate scheme to destroy it.

On returning home, Geordie drew his seat to the fire, and sat silent. His mother, who was sitting opposite to him, asked him if he had earned any money that day, wherewith he could buy some clothes for the child he had undertaken to bring up. With becoming gravity, and without appearing to feel that any remarkable change had taken place upon his finances, Geordie slowly put his hand into his pocket, drew out the twenty pounds, and gave his mother one for interim expenditure. As he returned the money into his pocket, he said, with an air of the most supreme nonchalance, "If ye want ony mair, ye can let me ken."

The mother and daughter looked at each other with surprise and astonishment, mixed with some pleasure, and, perhaps, some apprehension. Neither of them put any question as to where the money had been got; for Geordie's look had already informed them that any such question would not be answered.

Meanwhile, no great change seemed to have been produced in Geordie Willison's manner of living, in consequence of his having become comparatively rich. He lounged about the streets, joking with his acquaintances—went his messages—sometimes appeared with a crowd of boys after him—dressed in the same style—and, altogether, was just the same kind of person he used to be.

Time passed, and precisely on the same day next year he went to Lady Maitland's. In the passage, he was met by the housekeeper, Louise Grecourt, who asked him what he wanted. He looked at her intently, and recognised in this person's voice the same tones which had arrested his ears so forcibly on the night of the attempted murder of the child. To make himself more certain of this, Geordie led her into conversation.

"I want my Leddy Maitland," answered Geordie—"are ye her leddyship?"

"No," answered the housekeeper, with a kick of her head, which Geordie took as a sign that his bait had been swallowed; "I am not Lady Maitland—I am in de charge of her ladyship's house. Vat you vant vit her ladyship? Can Louise Grecourt not satisfy a fellow like you?"

"No exactly at present," answered Geordie; "tell her leddyship that Geordie Willison wants to speak to her."

Louise started when he mentioned his name, certifying Geordie that she was in the secret of his knowledge. Her manner changed. She became all condescension; and, leading him up stairs, opened a door, and showed him into a room where Lady Maitland was sitting.

"I houp yer leddyship," began Geordie, with a low bow, "has been quite weel sin' I had the honour o' yer acquaintaneeship, whilk is now a year, come twa o'clock o' this day. Ye micht maybe be thinking we were gaun to fa' out o' acquaintaneeship; but I'm no ane o' yer conceited creatures wha despise auld freends, and rin after new anes, merely because they may think them brawer—sae ye may keep yer mind easy on that score; and I wad farther tak the liberty to assure yer leddyship that, if ye hae ony siller by ye at present, I winna hesitate to gie ye a proof o' the continuance o' my freendship, by offerin' to tak frae ye as meikle as I may need."

"How much is that?" asked Lady Maitland.

"Twunty pund, my leddy, twunty pund," answered Geordie.

The money was handed to him by the lady, without saying a word; and, having again made a low bow, he departed.

Next year, Geordie Willison went and paid a visit to Lady Maitland, got from her the same sum of money, and nothing passed to indicate what it was paid for. The lady clearly remained under the impression that the child was not in existence.

It happened that, some time after the last payment, Geordie was on the pier of Leith, with a view to fall in with some chance message or carriage to Edinburgh. A vessel had newly arrived from the Continent, and one of the passengers was Sir Marmaduke Maitland. Geordie was employed to assist in getting his luggage removed to Edinburgh. On arriving at the house, Lady Maitland, with Louise behind her, was standing on the landing-place to receive her husband. They saw Geordie walking alongside of him, and talking to him in the familiar manner which his alleged silliness in many cases entitled him to do; but whatever they may have felt or expressed, by looks or otherwise, Geordie seemed not to be any way out of his ordinary manner, and they soon observed, from the conduct of Sir Marmaduke, that Geordie had said nothing to him. Geordie bustled about, assisting to take out the luggage, while Sir Marmaduke was standing in the lobby with his lady alongside of him.

"Is there any news stirring in these parts, Geordie, worth telling to one who has been from his own country so long as I have been."

"Naething worth mentioning, Sir Marmaduke," answered Geordie; "a'thing quiet, decent, and orderly i' the toun and i' the country—no excepting your ain house here, whar I hae missed mony a gude luck-penny sin' your honour departed."

"Has Lady Maitland not been in the habit of employing you, then, Geordie?" asked Sir Marmaduke.

"No exactly, Sir Marmaduke," answered Geordie; "the last time I ca'ed on her leddyship, she asked me what I wanted. I didna think it quite ceevil, and I haena gane back; but I canna deny that she paid me handsomely for the last thing I carried for her. She's a fine leddy, Sir Marmaduke, and meikle credit to ye."

At any subsequent period, when Geordie's yearly pension was due, he generally contrived to call for Lady Maitland when Sir Marmaduke was out of the way. He took always the same amount of money. The only departure he made from this custom was in the year of his sister's marriage, when he asked and got a sum of forty pounds, twenty of which he gave to her. Her husband, George Dempster, had at one time been a butler in Lady Maitland's family; but her ladyship did not know either that he was acquainted with George Willison, or that he was now married to his sister. We may explain that George Dempster was in the family at the time when Geordie brought home the child; and, in some of his conversations with his wife, he did not hesitate to say that he suspected that Lady Maitland bore a child to a French lackey, who was then about the house; but the child never made its appearance, and strong grounds existed for believing that it was made away with. Geordie himself sometimes heard these stories; but he affected to be altogether indifferent to them, putting a silly question to Dempster, as if he had just awakened from sleep, and had forgot the thread of the discourse, and, when he got his answer, pretending to fall asleep again.

In the meantime the young foundling, who had been christened Jessie Warriston, by Geordie's desire, grew up to womanhood. She became, in every respect, the picture of her mother—tall and noble in her appearance. Her hair was jet black, and her eye partook of the same colour,

with a lustre that dazzled the beholder. Her manners were cheerful and kind; and she was grateful for the most ordinary attentions paid to her by Widow Willison, or her daughter—the latter of whom often took her out with her to the house of Ludovic Brodie, commonly called Birkiehaugh, a nephew of Sir Marmaduke Maitland, with whom George Dempster was serving as butler, in his temporary house, about a mile south from Edinburgh.

This young laird had seen Jessie Warriston, and been struck with her noble appearance. He asked Dempster who she was, and was told that she was a young person who lived with one of his wife's friends. Brodie, whose character was that of a most unprincipled rake, often endeavoured to make up to Jessie, as she went backwards and forwards between his house and Widow Willison's. In all endeavours he had been unsuccessful; for Jessie—independently of being aware, from the admonitions of the pious Widow Willison, that an acquaintanceship with a person above her degree was improper and dangerous—had a lover of her own, a young man of the name of William Forbes, a clerk to Mr. Carstairs, an advocate, at that time in great practice at the Scotch bar. Forbes generally accompanied Jessie when she went out at night, after she told him that Brodie had insulted her; and she discontinued her visits to George Dempster.

Foiled by the precautions which Jessie took to avoid him, Brodie only became more determined to get his object gratified. He meditated various schemes for this purpose He turned off Dempster, who might have been a spy upon his conduct; and it was remarked, by the people living near to Widow Willison's, that a woman, rolled up in a cloak, had been seen watching about the door. Geordie, though apparently not listening to any of these transactions, was all alive to the interests of his foundling. He kept a constant eye upon the neighbourhood, and did not fail to

observe, that a woman, of the description stated, came always, at a certain hour, near his mother's door, about the time that Jessie generally went out.

Now, Geordie was determined to know, by some means, who this woman was; and, as the day was drawing in, he thought he might disguise himself in such a way as to get into conversation with her.

Having equipped himself in the garb of a cadie, of more respectable appearance than he himself exhibited, and put a black patch over his eye, and a broad slouched hat over his head, Geordie took his station to watch the woman in the cloak.

"Wha may ye be waitin' for?" said Geordie, in a feigned voice, to the woman, whom he at last found.

"Are you von of de cadies?" asked the woman.

"Yes," answered Geordie.

"Do you live in de neighbourhood?" asked again the woman.

"I wadna live in ony ither place war ye to pay me for't," answered Geordie.

"Very good—dat is a very good answer," said the woman; "dere is a little money for you."

"I dinna tak siller for tellin' folk whar I live," said Geordie; "but, if there's onything else I can, in my capacity o' cadie, do for ye, maybe I may then condescend to tak yer siller."

"*Mon Dieu!* vat a trange fellow!" ejaculated the woman. "Vell, can you tell me if a young woman, carrying the name of Jessie Varriston, lives up dat stair?" pointing with her hand.

"I ken the lassie as weel as I ken mysel," answered Geordie; "she lives just whar ye hae said."

"Very goot—very goot—dat is just vat I vant—*un sage homme* dis—excellent goot chap. Now, tell me if de girl lives vit an imbecile that is von idiot, called George Villi-

son, and how long she has lived vit him, vere she comes from, and vat is her history."

"Ye hae asked four questions a' in ae breath," said Geordie, who wanted a prologue, to give him time to consider how much he could say, so as to serve the two purposes of safety and drawing out the woman at the same time. "It's no quite fair, to an ignorant man like me, to put sae mony questions at a time; but it's my wish to serve ye, an' I'll do my best to answer them. Jessie Warriston lives wi' the idiot cratur Geordie Willison's mither, and she has lived wi' her for seventeen years, that is, since she was a bit bairn. I'm thinking she'll be a granddochter o' Widow Willison's—dinna ye think sae yersel'?"

"De brute!" muttered the woman to herself—"de brute is begun, like all de rest of his countrymen, to put de interrogation ven he should give de respond. You do not know den de girl's history, do you not?"

"No, but maybe I may be able to get it for ye," an-answered Geordie, unwilling to be dismissed *simpliciter*.

"Very vell, anoter time—I vish you, in de meantime, to carry dis letter to Ludovic Brodie, Esq. of Birkichaugh. Do you know vere he lives?"

"I will carry it wi' the greatest o' pleasure, madam," answered Geordie.

The woman handed him the letter, with some more money, and departed.

Geordie got the letter speedily read to him by a person in his confidence. It was in these terms:—

"Mon cher Ludovic,—Jessie Varriston lives vit de idiot, Geordie Villison, in Leit Vynd. De bearer of dis knows her very vell, and vill assist you in de abduction. My Lady Maitland and I both tink we know her too; bot we do not vish at present to let any von know dis, for certain reasons, vich we cannot explain to you. Ven you arrange vit de bearer to carry her off, let me know, and I vill do

every ting in my power to assist you, as my lady has a grand vish for de abduction of de vench vithout procrastination. My lady does not know of my having given you intelligence of her being up to de affair.—Yours till death.

"LOUISE GRECOURT."

From this letter, Geordie saw plainly that Lady Maitland and Louise had, at last, got some information regarding Jessie, which had led them to suspect that she was the child they had supposed to be dead. It was clear, however, that Brodie knew nothing of their suspicions, and the two parties were, undoubtedly, after the same game, with different objects and for different reasons. Having folded the letter and sealed it, so as to avoid suspicion, Geordie went out and delivered it into the hands of Birkichaugh.

Brodie, having read the letter, examined Geordie from head to heel—"Canst thou be trusted, man, in an affair requiring secrecy and ability to execute it?" asked he.

"Do you see ony thing aboot me to produce ony doubt o' my ability or my secrecy?" answered Geordie. "Nae man will coup wi' Peter Finlayson in ony expedition whar death, danger, or exposure are to be avoided, or whar ability to plan, an' quickness to execute, and cunnin' to conceal, are things o' consideration or importance."

"Well, Peter, I believe thou art the man. I wish to carry off the girl, Jessie Warriston, to-morrow night—canst thou assist me in that enterprise?"

"It's just in the like o' thae bits o' ploys that the genius o' Peter Finlayson lies," answered Geordie. "I ken the lassie maist intimately, and can bring her to ony appointed spot at ony hour ye please to name."

"To-morrow night, then," said Brodie, "at eight o'clock, at the resting-stone at the top of the Leith Lone; knowest thou the place?"

"I do," answered Geordie; "and shall attend; but ye ken, I suppose, the difference that lies atween the ordinary

jobs o' us cadies, and the like o' thae michty emprises, whar life and limb, and honour and reputation, are concerned. In the first case, the pay comes after the wark—in the ither, the wark comes after the pay; an' it's richt natural, whan ye think o't; because I hae often seen the city guard kick the wark and the warkmen to the deevil in an instant, and the puir cadie gets only broken banes for his pains."

"There, then," said Brodie, "there is half of thy fee; the other shall be given when thou bringest the girl."

"Vera weel," said Geordie, counting the gold pieces; "and thank ye. I wunna fail in my duty, I warrant ye."

Next night, at the time and place appointed, Geordie attended with his charge. He found Brodie in waiting with a carriage, in which was seated Louise. Jessie was told to enter, and complied. Brodie jumped in, and Geordie held out his hand for the other half of the fee, which he received. He now slipped a piece of twine round the handle of the carriage, so as to prevent it from being opened; and, in a moment vaulted up beside the coachman, whose hat, as if by mere accident, he knocked off.

"Gie me up my bannet, ye whelp," said the coachman, angrily.

"Cadies are no cadies to coachmen," answered Geordie, dryly; "your brains maun be far spent, man, when they canna keep a house ower their head."

The coachman jumped down for his hat, and Geordie, applying the whip to the horses, was off in an instant. The coachman cried, "Stop the coach!" Brodie, thinking it was a chase, cried to drive like the devil. Geordie obeyed to the letter, and dashed on like lightning.

The coach stopped, and was instantly surrounded by a number of people, who opened the door, and pulling the three inmates out, led them into a large building, the door of which was double-bolted, and made a tremendous noise as it revolved on its hinges. The party were taken up

stairs, and introduced (Geordie leading the way with his hat in his hand) into a large room, where several people were present, apparently waiting for them.

"I beg leave to introduce," said Geordie, bowing low, "to yer lordship, the sheriff—wha has dune us the honour to receive us at this time in sae safe a place as the jail, whar we are perfectly free frae a' interruption—his honour, Ludovic Brodie, Esq. o' Birkiehaugh, and her highness, Louise Grecourt, a French leddy o' repute. They are anxious to receive yer opinion on a point o' law, in whilk they are personally concerned, a favour, I doutna, yer honour will condescend to grant."

The sheriff immediately set about taking a precognition, for which he had been, by Geordie, previously prepared. Brodie was committed on a charge of abduction; but Louise, on the intercession of Geordie and his ward, was allowed to get off. Some time afterwards, Brodie was tried, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

Geordie had now occasion to call upon Lady Maitland for his yearly allowance. Louise having been liberated without trial, it had not yet reached the ears of her or Lady Maitland that Peter Finlayson was, in fact, Geordie Willison. Brodie had made no communication of that fact as yet, and neither Louise nor Lady Maitland could have any idea that Geordie knew of the hand they had in the attempted abduction, or of their knowledge or suspicion that Jessie Warriston was the intended victim of their cruelty.

"My leddy," began Geordie, with his accustomed bow, but with more than his usual significancy of look, "this is the first time for these seventeen years that I hae been awantin' in my attention and duty as yer leddyship's freend; for I am ae day ahint the usual time o' my veesit to yer leddyship, for whilk mark o' disrespect I beg leave to solicit yer leddyship's pardon, upon the condition that I

offer, that I shall promise, as I here most solemnly do, that I shall not be again wantin' in my duty to yer leddyship. Can I say I hae yer leddyship's pardon?"

Crucified by Geordie's cruel humour, but compelled to be silent, Lady Maitland signified her favour.

"Yer leddyship's condescension is a great relief to me," resumed Geordie. "They say Sir Marmaduke's nevey, Brodie o' Birkiehaugh, is in jail for attempting to rin awa' wi' a young lassie. What he was to do wi' her, God only kens, but there can be nae doubt that he would get sma' favour and grace frae yer leddyship to ony attempt on the puir cratur's life. Na, na—a nobility sae michtie as yer leddyship's, an' a saftness o' heart whilk far excels that o' the bleatin' ewe for the puir lambie that lies deein' by its side, couldna patroneeze onything like the takin' awa o' God's breath frae the nostrils o' innocence."

Geordie, whose cruelty was refined, paused, and fixed his eyes on the lady, who appeared to be in agony. She rose quickly, and went, as usual, to her bureau to give him money.

"Stop," said Geordie; "I haena asked ye for't yet. I dinna like awmous. It's only when I want to favour yer leddyship that I tak siller fra ye, and naething I hae yet said could warrant yer leddyship in supposing that I was to confer sic a favour on ye, at least at the particular time when ye rose to open yer kist; and I dinna need to say, that favours quickly conferred are sune repented o'. Weel, the bit lassie wham Birkiehaugh was after, is a young creature, ca'ed Jessie Warriston, wha lives wi' my mither. Few folk on earth ken meikle about her; but my mither swears that her mither maun hae been hanged, for she has a ring round her bonny white craig, like that on the neck o' the turtle doo. I laugh, an' say to the bonny bairn, that it will stan' in place o' a coral or cornelian necklace to her.—Ha! ha! I see your leddyship's inclined to laugh too—eh?"

And Geordie again eyed the lady, who was as far from laughing as the criminal at the stake.

"Weel," resumed the crucifier, "Birkiehaugh didna succeed—thanks to Peter Finlayson, honest fallow—and the lassie is safe again; but I hae made a vow, and I hope sae gude a ane will be regularly recorded whar it should be, that the first person wha tries to lay sae meikle as a finger on that bonny bairn's head, or blaw a single breath o' suspicion against her reputation, will meet wi' the just indignation o' Geordie Willison. An' noo, my leddy, I will favour ye by accepting, at yer hands, twenty pund."

Geordie received, and counted the money, as usual, and, with a bow, retired.

The six months of Birkiehaugh's confinement expired, and, about the same time, Sir Marmaduke Maitland died. Having had no children by his wife, the title and fine property of Castle Gower fell to Brodie, who was his brother's son—Brodie being the name of the family who had succeeded to the title. No time was lost by Brodie's man of business to take out a brief from Chancery, for getting him served heir male of taillie to the estate and honours. The brief was published, and no doubt anywhere prevailed of the verdict which would be pronounced under it.

About this time it was observed that Geordie Willison had long interviews with Advocate Carstairs; but neither his mother, nor his sister, nor, indeed, any person, could get him to say a word on the subject. His manner, in regard to the story of Jessie, had been all along quite uniform, and many years had passed since his mother had given up in despair all attempts to get him to divulge it. He was, at present, apparently very absent, as if something of great importance occupied his mind.

One day, on leaving the advocate, he went direct for the

house of Lady Maitland. He was admitted as usual. He said he wished to see her ladyship and Louise together.

"I hae heard," began Geordie, "that my worthy freend, Sir Marmaduke, is dead. He was a gude man, and may the Lord deal mercifully wi' him! Ludovic Brodie, they say, is the heir, an' I dinna say he has nae richt to that title—though, maybe, it may cost some wigs a pickle flour to mak that oot. Noo, ye see, my Leddy Maitland, I hae dune ye some favours, and I'm just to take the liberty to ask ane in return. You an' yer freend, Louise, maun admit, in open court, that yer leddyship bore, upon the 19th day of February o' the year 16—, a dochter, and that that dochter is Jessie Warriston."

Geordie waited for an answer, fixing his eyes on Lady Maitland.

Louise immediately began to make indications of a spirit of opposition; and Lady Maitland herself, gathering up any traces of dignity, which the presence of Geordie generally dispersed, replied—

"Thou hast no proof, sir, of the extraordinary charge, thou hast now, for the first time, brought against me; and I cannot convict myself of a crime."

Louise blustered and supported her lady.

"Vat, in the name of God, is de meaning of dis fellow's demand? *Parbleu!* He is mad—*de fou*—bad—vicked—mechant. Vere I your ladyship, I would trust him out, and give him de grand kick, and tomble him down de marche de stairs. Vy, sir, could you have de grand impudence to tell my lady she be de bad woman."

Geordie heard all this with calmness and silence.

"It's o' sma importance to me," he resumed, "whether yer leddyship comply wi' my request or no; for, indeed, though politeness made me ca' it a favour conferred upon me, the favour is a' the ither way. Let yer leddyship be silent, an' I'll prove that yer leddyship bore the bairn; but

ye maun ken that Geordie Willison has nae power ower the law—when the seals are broken, the judgment will come; and I canna prove the birth o' the bairn without, at the same time, and by the same prufe, proving that ye attempted to strangle it, and left it for dead in the hedges o' Warriston. Here is yer leddyship's necklace, whilk I took fra the craig o' the struggling cratur, and here are the claes it had on, marked wi' draps o' blude that cam frae its little mouth. I show thae things no as proofs on whilk I mean a'thegither to rest, but only to testify to ye what ye sae weel ken, that what I say is true. Speak, noo, my leddies—your lives are i' the hands o' the idiot cratur Geordie Willison. If ye gang to the court, ye are saved—if ye winna, ye are lost. Will ye gang, or will ye hang?"

The women were both terrified by the statement of Geordie. Reluctant to make any such admission, they struggled with the various emotions of indignation, pride, and fear, which took, by turns, possession of their bosoms. Lady Maitland fainted, and Louise was totally unable to render her assistance; for she lay in a hysterical state of excitement on the floor. Geordie locked the door, and kept his eyes fixed on the females. He yielded them no aid; but stood like a destroying angel, witnessing the effects of his desolation. Lady Maitland at last opened her eyes, and having collected her senses, resolved to comply with Geordie's request. She said to him, that, provided nothing was asked beyond the questions, whether she bore the child on the day mentioned, and whether Jessie Maitland, whom she had secretly seen, was that child—she would answer them in the affirmative. This satisfied Geordie, and he departed.

On the day of the service of Ludovic Brodie, a brief was taken out in name of Jessie Warriston or Maitland, as heir female of taillie to the estate and title of Maitland of Castle

Gower. Brodie and his agents had no notice of the brief until they came into court.

The briefs being read, Brodie's propinquity was proved, and no person had any idea that the existence of a nearer heir could be established. But the door of the court opened, and Lady Maitland and Louise Grecourt stood before the inquest. They swore to the birth of the child on the day mentioned, and that Jessie Maitland, who was presented to them in court by Geordie Willison himself, was that child.

An objection was taken by Brodie's agents, that the child was illegitimate, because it was born ten months, minus two days, after Sir Marmaduke went to the continent; but the judge overruled the objection, stating that it was the law of Scotland, that every child born within ten months of the husband's departure, is a legal child.

Jessie Warriston was, therefore, served heir, according to the terms of her brief. She went in her own carriage, in which sat Geordie Willison, to take possession of her estates and titles. She was now Lady Jessie Maitland of Castle Gower, and was soon afterwards united to William Forbes, her old lover.

THE SNOW STORM OF 1825.

Our readers will recollect the dreadful snow storm that occurred in the year 1825. Indeed, it is impossible that any one, who was above the years of childhood at the time, can have forgot it, or can ever forget it. It was the most tremendous with which this country has been visited for a century. For nearly six weeks, and in some places for a much longer period, every road, excepting those in the immediate vicinity of large towns, was blocked up, and rendered impassable, by either horse or foot; and one consequence was, that scores of travellers, of all descriptions, were suddenly arrested in their several places of temporary sojournment on the road, and held in durance during the whole period of the storm, without the possibility of communicating with their friends, or, in the case of mercantile travellers, with their employers.

It was a weary time, on the whole, to those who were thus laid under embargo; but not without its pleasures either; for each house thus situated, having perhaps a dozen strangers in it, from and going to all parts of the kingdom, became a distinct and independent little community, from which its local exclusion from the busy world had shut out, also, for the time at any rate, much of its cares and troubles—a philosophic spirit soon prevailing, after the first day or two's confinement, to make the most of what could not be helped.

The writer of this sheet happened to be one of nine who were shut up in the way alluded to, in an inn in the south of Scotland; and although, as already said, it was rather a weary thing on the whole, yet was it not without its en-

joyments. Our *ennui* was often delightfully relieved by the diversity of character as developed in our little community; for we had, if we may so speak, the salt, the pepper, and the vinegar of human dispositions, sprinkled throughout the party, which not only took from the cold insipidity of our confinement, but gave to it a rich and pleasant relish. Our host's cellar and larder happened to be well stored, while the house was, in all other respects, an excellent one; so, what with the produce of the former, and the roaring fires kept up by Jamie, the waiter, we had really nothing to complain of on the score of creature comforts—and it is amazing how far the possession of these will go to reconcile men to otherwise very unpleasant situations. In this case, they were enhanced by the dreary prospect from without—the howling storm, the drifting snow, and the wide, dismal, monotonous waste of dazzling white that lay all around us.

The consciousness of the comforts we enjoyed, in short, put us all in good humour with one another; while a fellowship in misfortune, and a community of feeling, as well as of persons, introduced a degree of friendliness and intimacy, to which few other circumstances, perhaps, would have given rise. We had our small round of standard jokes, peculiar to our situation, which few else could have understood, and fewer still have appreciated, though they did understand them. We had, too, a small round of harmless tricks, which we regularly played off every day on some one or other of the corps. But, notwithstanding all this—the larder, the cellar, the fire, the jokes, and the tricks—time did occasionally hang rather heavily upon our hands, especially in the evenings. To lessen this weight, we latterly fell upon the contrivance of telling stories, one or two of us each night, by turns. The idea is a borrowed one, as the reader will at once perceive, but we humbly think not a pin the worse on that account. There was no limitation, of course, as to the subject. Each was allowed to

tell what story he liked; but it was the general understanding that these stories should be personal, if possible—that is, that each should relate the most remarkable circumstances in his own life. Those who had nothing of the kind to communicate, were, of course, allowed to get off with anything else they chose to substitute. The first to whose lot it fell to entertain us in this way, was a fat, good-humoured, good-natured, little, hunch-backed gentleman, with a short leg, and a bright yellow waistcoat. He was a mercantile traveller, and, if I recollect right, a native of Newcastle.

When the little man was asked to open his budget, "Why, gentlemen," said he, "I do not see that I can do better than comply with the understood wish of the company, by giving you a sketch of my own life, which you will find to present, I think, as curious a race, or struggle, or whatever else you may choose to call it, between luck and misfortune, as perhaps you have heard of:—

You must know, then, my friends (went on the little gentleman in the bright yellow waistcoat), that the indications of my future good fortune began to exhibit themselves as early as they well could. I was born with a caul upon my head, gentlemen, which all of you know is an indubitable token that the little personage to whom it belongs will be singularly fortunate in life. Well, gentleman, I was favoured, as I have already said, with one of those desirable head-pieces; and great was the joy the circumstance gave rise to amongst the female friends and gossips who were assembled on the occasion. The midwife said that everything I should put my hand to would prosper, and that I would be, to a certainty, at the very least, a general, a bishop, or a judge; the nurse to whom I was subsequently consigned, on the same ground, dubbed me a duke, and would never call me by any other title; whilst my poor mother saw me, in perspective, sitting amongst the great ones of the earth,

surrounded with power, wealth, and glory. Such were the bright visions of my future prosperity, to which my caul gave rise; and probably they might have been realized, had it not been for an unlucky counteracting or thwarting power that always stepped in, seemingly for no other purpose but to disappoint my own hopes and those of my friends; sometimes baulking my expectations altogether, when on the point of fruition—sometimes converting that to evil in me which would assuredly have produced good to any other person. But to proceed with my history. I grew up a fine, stout, well-made child. Ay, you may laugh, gentlemen (said the little man, good-humouredly, seeing a titter go round at this personal allusion, which so ill accorded with his present deformed appearance), but it was the case, I assure you, until I met with the accidents that altered my shape to what you now see it. Well, I repeat, that I grew a fine promising child, and, to the inexpressible amazement and delight of my parents, showed symptoms of taking unusually early to my legs.

Nor were these symptoms unfaithful. I took to my pins, on my own account, before I was ten months old; but, unfortunately, my first walk was into a draw-well, where I would infallibly have been drowned, if it had not been for a large Newfoundland dog which my father kept, and which was close by me at the time of the accident. The faithful creature leapt in after me, and kept me afloat, until my father came and extricated me. After this, I was never trusted a moment out of sight; and thus, instead of this precocious developement of my physical powers proving a blessing to me, it proved a curse; for it deprived me of all liberty. As I grew up, however, this restraint became less rigorous, and I was permitted to ramble in the garden; and one of my first feats, after obtaining this freedom, was, to climb a high wall, to come at an uncommonly fine apple that had long tempted me with its rosy cheeks, and I had

just succeeded in getting near enough to the prize to grasp it, when, in making this effort, down I came; and this leg, gentlemen (said the little man, holding out his deformed limb), was the consequence. I fell and broke my leg, just as I was about to grasp the apple. Fatal type of all my subsequent misfortunes!

I have now, gentlemen (went on the little man), to account for the other deformity that disfigures me, viz.,—my hump-back. This befell me in the following manner. Playing one day with a number of boys, of about my own age, which was then six or seven, a big fellow, of double the size of any of us, came in amongst us, and began to plunder us of our playthings; and he was in the very act of robbing me of a hoop, when another lad, still stronger and bigger, who saw the attempted robbery, generously ran to my assistance, and aimed a tremendous blow with a stick at my assailant. The blow, however, missed him at whom it was aimed, and took me exactly on the small of the back, which it broke in two as if it had been a pipe shank; and the consequence was, as you see, gentlemen (said the little man in the bright yellow waistcoat, edging round, at the same time, to indicate his hump).

Well, then, gentlemen (he went on), up to my ninth year, this was all the good fortune that my caul brought me—that is, being first half-drowned, then breaking my leg, and lastly my back. To compensate, however, in some measure, for these mischances, I turned out an excellent scholar; and, especially, became a very expert Latinist—a circumstance which my father, who had a great veneration for the language, thought sufficient alone to make my fortune; and it certainly procured me—that is, very nearly procured me—in the meantime, some of the chief honours of the school. I say very nearly—for I did not actually obtain them; but it was only by the merest accident in the world that I did not. The misapprehension of a

single word deprived me of a prize which was about to be awarded to me, and gave it to one of my competitors. This was reckoned a very hard case; but there was no help for it.

Still there was luck in the caul, gentlemen (continued the little man in the bright yellow waistcoat), as you shall hear. Going home from school one day, a distance of about a mile and a half, I found a very handsome gold watch, with valuable appendages, lying upon the road. I was at first afraid to left the glittering treasure, hardly believing it possible that so rich and splendid a thing could be without an owner; but, gradually picking up courage, I seized on the watch, hurried it into my pocket, and ran onwards like a madman. I had not run far, however, when a man, respectably dressed, but who seemed the worse of liquor, or rather like one just recovering from a debauch, met me, and, seizing me by the breast, fiercely asked me if I had seen anything of a gold watch. I instantly confessed that I had found such a thing; and, trembling with apprehension, for the fellow continued to look furiously at me, produced the watch.

"Very well," said he, taking it from me. "Now, you little villian you, confess. You did not find the watch, but stole it from me whilst I slept on the road-side."

I protested that it was not so—that I had found it as I had said. To this protest the fellow replied by striking me a violent blow on the side of the head, which stretched me on the road; where, after administering two or three parting kicks, to teach me honesty, as he said, he left me in a state of insensibility. I was shortly afterwards picked up and carried home; but so severe had been the drubbing I got, that I was obliged to keep my bed for three weeks after. And this was all I gained by finding a gold watch. Had any other person found it, they would have been allowed to keep it, or, at the worst, have got a handsome

reward for giving it up; but such things were to be not in any case in which I should be concerned.

Still I say, gentlemen (continued the little man in the bright yellow waistcoat), there *was* luck in the caul; for, soon after, a distant relation of my mother's, who had been long in the West Indies, and had there realized a large fortune, having come to England on some business, paid us a visit, and was so well pleased with the attention shown him, and with the society he got introduced to, that he spent the whole subsequent period of his temporary residence in this country with us. During this time, he became remarkably fond of me—so fond that he could never be without me. I was obliged to accompany him in all his walks, and even to sleep with him. In short, he became so attached to me, that it was evident to every one that some good would come out of it; for he was immensely rich, and had no family of his own, never having been married. Indeed, that I would be the better for the old boy's love was not matter of conjecture, for he frequently hinted it very broadly. He would often take me on his knee, and, while fondling me, would say, in presence of my father and mother—"Well, my little fellow, who knows but you may ride in your carriage yet? As odd things have happened." Then, "Would you like to be a rich man, Bobby?" he would inquire, looking archly at me. "If you continue as good a boy as you are just now, I'll undertake to promise that you will." In short, before leaving us, our wealthy friend, whose name was Jeremiah Hairsplitter, held out certain hopes to my parents of my being handsomely provided for in his will. This so affected us all, that we wept bitterly when the good old man left us to return to the West Indies; where, however, he told us, he now intended remaining only a short time, having made up his mind to come home and spend the remainder of his days with us.

Well, gentlemen (said the little hump-backed man in the bright yellow waistcoat), here was a very agreeable prospect, you'll all allow; and it was one in which there appeared so much certainty, that it cost my father—who had been led to believe he should get a handsome slice too—many serious thoughts as to how we should dispose of the money—how lay it out to the best advantage. My father, who was a very pious man, determined, for one thing, to build a church; and, as to me and my fortune, he thought the best thing I could do, seeing, from my deformities, that I was not very well adapted for undergoing the fatigues of a professional life, was, when I should become a little older, to turn country gentleman; and with this idea he was himself so well pleased, that he began, thinking it best to take time by the forelock, to look around for a suitable seat for me when I should come of age and be ready to act on my own account; and he fortunately succeeded in finding one that seemed a very eligible investment. It was a very handsome country house, about the distance of three miles from where we lived, and to which there was attached an estate of 1000 acres of land, all in a high state of cultivation. The upset price of the whole—for the property was at that moment on sale—was £20,000; a dead bargain, as the lawyer who had the management of the property assured us. It was worth at least double the money, he said; and in this Mr. Longshanks, the land-measurer, whom my father also consulted on the subject, perfectly agreed; but was good enough to give my father a quiet hint to hold off a bit, and, as the proprietor was in great distress for money, he might probably get the estate for £18,000, or something, at any rate, considerably below the price named. Grateful for this hint, my father invited Mr. Longshanks to dine with him, and gave him a bottle of his best wine. Now, gentlemen, please to observe (said the little hunch-backed gentleman in the bright yellow waist-

coat) that while we were thus treating about an estate worth £20,000, we had not a sixpence wherewith to buy it; so that Mr. Longshanks' hint about holding off was rather a superfluous one. But then our prospects were good—nay, certain; there was, therefore, no harm—nay, it was proper and prudent to anticipate matters a little in the way we did; so that we might at once have the advantage of sufficient time to do things deliberately, and be prepared to make a good use of our fortune the moment we got possession of it.

That our prospects were excellent, I think you will all allow, gentlemen, when you take into account what I have already told regarding our worthy relative; but that they really were so, you will still more readily admit, when I tell you that we received many letters from Mr. Hairsplitter, after his arrival in Jamaica (for he now opened a regular correspondence with us), in all of which he continued not only to keep our hopes alive, as to the destination of his wealth, but to increase them; so that I—for the bulk of his fortune, there was no doubt, was intended for me—was already looked upon as a singularly lucky young dog; and of this opinion, in the most unqualified sense, and in a most especial manner, was my mother, my nurse, and the lady who ushered me into the world—all of whom exultingly referred to my caul, and to their own oft-expressed sentiments regarding the luck that was to befall me.

But, to return to my story. After a lapse of about two or three years, during which, as I have said, we received many letters from our worthy relative, one came, in which he informed us that it was the last we should have from him from Jamaica, as he had wound up all his affairs, and was about to leave the island, to return home and spend the remainder of his days with us, or in our immediate neighbourhood.

Well, gentlemen, you see matters were gradually ap-

proaching to a very delightful crisis; and we, as you may believe, saw it with no small satisfaction. We indulged in the most delicious dreams; indeed, our whole life was now one continued reverie of the most soothing and balmy kind. From this dreamy state, however, we were very soon awakened by the following paragraph in a newspaper, which my father accidentally stumbled on, one morning as we were at breakfast. It was headed "Dreadful Shipwreck," and went on thus:—"It is with feelings of the most sincere regret we inform our readers, that the Isabella, from Jamaica to London, has foundered at sea, and every one on board perished, together with the whole of a most valuable cargo. Amongst the unfortunate passengers in this ill-fated vessel was a Mr. Jeremiah Hairsplitter, a well-known Jamaica planter, who was on his return, for good and all, to his native land. The whole of this gentleman's wealth, which was enormous, will now go, it is said (he having died intestate), to a poor man in this neighbourhood [Liverpool], who is nearest of kin."

Well, gentlemen (continued the little hump-backed man in the bright yellow waistcoat), here was a pretty finish to all our bright anticipations! For some time, indeed, we entertained hopes that the reports, especially the last, might be false; but, alas! they turned out too true. True, true were they, to the letter. My father, unwilling to believe that all was lost, called upon a lawyer in the town where we resided, who had a good deal to do with our late relative's affairs; and, after mentioning to him the footing we were on with the deceased, and the expectations he had led us to indulge in, inquired if *nothing* would arise to us from Mr. Hairsplitter's effects.

"Not a rap!" was the laconic and dignified reply—"not a cross, not a cowrie! You haven't a shadow of claim to anything. All that Mr. Hairsplitter may have said goes for nothing, as it is not down in black and white, in legal phrase."

So, my friends (said the narrator, with a sigh) here was an end to this fortune and to my luck, at that bout, at any rate. Still, gentlemen (went on the little hump-backed man in the bright yellow waistcoat), I maintain there was luck in the caul.

I was now, you must know, my friends, getting up in years—that is to say, I was now somewhere about one-and-twenty. Well, my father, thinking it full time that I should be put in a way of doing something for myself, applied, in my behalf, to a certain nobleman who resided in our neighbourhood, and who was under obligations to my father for some election services. When my father called on the peer alluded to, and informed him of his object—"Why, sir," said his lordship, "this is rather a fortunate circumstance for both of us. I am just now in want of precisely such a young man as you describe your son to be, to act as my secretary and amanuensis, and will therefore be very glad to employ him." His lordship then mentioned his terms. They were liberal, and, of course, instantly accepted. This settled, my father was desired to send me to Cram Hall, his lordship's residence, next day, to enter on my new duties.

Here, then, you see, was luck at last, gentlemen (said the little hump-backed gentleman in the bright yellow waistcoat); for the nobleman was powerful, and there was no saying what he might do for me. Next day, accordingly, I repaired to Cram Hall with a beating, but exulting heart; for I was at once proud of my employment, and terrified for my employer, who was, I knew, a dignified, pompous, vain, conceited personage.

"Show off your Latin to him, Dick, my boy," said my father, before I set out: "it will give him a good opinion of your talents and erudition." I promised that I would.

Well, on being introduced to his lordship, he received me with the most affable condescension; but there was

something about his affability, I thought, which made it look extremely like as if it had been assumed for the purpose of showing how a great man could descend.

"Glad to see you, young man," he said. "I hope you and I shall get on well together. But there was just one single question regarding you, which I quite forgot to put to your father. Do you understand Latin thoroughly?—that is, can you translate it readily?"

Feeling my own strength on this point, and delighted that he had afforded me so early an opportunity of declaring it, I replied, with a degree of exultation which I had some difficulty in repressing—"I flatter myself, my lord, that you will not find me deficient in that particular. I understand Latin very well, and will readily undertake to translate anything in that language which may be presented to me."

"In that case," replied his lordship, gravely, "I am sorry to say, young man, you will not suit me."

"How, my lord!" said I, with a look of mingled amazement and disappointment—"because I understand Latin? I should have thought that a recommendation to your lordship's service."

"Quite otherwise, sir," replied his lordship, coolly. "It may appear to you, indeed, sir, rather an odd ground of disqualification. But the thing is easily explained. I have often occasion, sir," he went on, with increasing dignity, "to write on matters of importance to my friends in the cabinet; and, when I have anything of a very particular nature to say, I always write my sentiments in Latin. It would therefore, sir, be imprudent of me to employ any one in transcribing such letters, who is conversant with the language alluded to; or, indeed, otherwise exposing them to the eye of such a person. You will, therefore, young man," continued the peer—now rising from his seat, as if with a desire that I should take the movement as a

hint that he wished the interview to terminate—"present my respects to your father, and say that I am very sorry for this affair—very sorry, indeed."

Saying this, he edged me towards the door; and, long before I reached it, bowed me a good morning, which there was no evading. I acknowledged it the best way I could, left the house, and returned home—I leave you, gentlemen, to conceive with what feelings. My Latin, you see, of which I was so vain, and which, with anybody else, would have been a help to success in the world in many situations, and in none could have been against it, was the very reverse to me.

That there was luck in the caul, gentlemen, nevertheless, I still maintain (said the little hump-backed man in the bright yellow waistcoat, laughing); and you will acknowledge it when I tell you that, soon after the occurrence just related, I bought a ticket in the lottery, which turned out a prize of £20,000."

"Ha, ha! at last!" here shouted out, with one voice, all the little man's auditors. "So you caught it at last!"

"Not so fast, gentlemen, if you please—not so fast," said the little man, gravely. The facts certainly were as I have stated. I did buy a ticket in the lottery. I recollect the number well, and will as long as I live. I chose it for its oddity. It was 9999, and it did turn out a £20,000 prize. But there is a trifling particular or two regarding it which I have yet to explain. A gentleman, an acquaintance of mine, to whom I had expressed some regret at having ventured so much money on a lottery ticket, offered not only to relieve me of it, but to give me a premium of five pounds, subject to a deduction of the price of a bowl of punch. "A bird in hand's worth two in the bush," thought I, and at once closed with his offer. Nay, so well pleased was I with my bargain, that I insisted on giving an additional bowl, and actually did so.

Next day, my ticket was drawn a twenty thousand pound prize! and I had the happiness (added the little man, with a rueful expression of countenance) of communicating to my friend his good luck, as the letter of advice on the subject came, in the first instance, to me.

However, gentlemen, luck there was in the caul still, say I (continued the little hump-backed gentleman in the bright yellow waistcoat). Love, gentlemen—sweet, dear, delightful love!—(here the little man looked extremely sentimental)—came to soothe my woes and banish my regrets. Yes, my friends he said (observing a slight smile of surprise and incredulity on the countenance of his auditors, proceeding, we need hardly say, from certain impressions regarding his personal appearance), I say that love—dear, delightful love—came now to my aid, to reconcile me to my misfortunes, and to restore my equanimity. The objects of my affections—for there were two——

"Oh, unconscionable man!" we here all exclaimed in one breath. "Two! Ah! too bad that."

"Yes, I repeat, two," said the little man composedly—"the objects of my passion were two." The one was a beautiful girl of three-and-twenty—the other, a beautiful little fortune of £10,000, of which she was in full and uncontrolled possession. Well, gentlemen, to make a long story short, we loved each other most devotedly; for she was a girl of singular judgment and penetration, and placed little store by mere personal appearance in those she loved: the mind, gentlemen—the mind was what this amiable girl looked to. Well, as I was saying, we loved each other with the fondest affection; and at length I succeeded in prevailing upon her to name the happy day when we should become one. Need I describe to you, gentleman, what were my transports—what the intoxicating feelings of delight with which my whole soul was absorbed by the contemplation of the delicious prospect that lay before me!

A beautiful woman and a fortune of £10,000 within my grasp! No. I'm sure I need not describe the sensations I allude to, gentlemen—you will at once conceive and appreciate them.

Well, my friends, all went smoothly on with me this time. The happy day arrived—we proceeded to church. The clergyman began the service. In three minutes more, gentleman, I would have been indissolubly united to my beloved and her £10,000, when, at this critical moment, a person rushed breathless into the church, forced his way through the crowd of friends by whom we were surrounded, and caught my betrothed in his arms, exclaiming—"Jessie, Jessie! would you forsake me? Have you forgot your vows?" Jessie replied by a loud shriek, and immediately fainted.

Here, then, you see, gentlemen (continued the little hump-backed man in the bright yellow waistcoat), was a pretty kick-up all in a moment.

In a twinkling, the bevy of friends by whom we were accompanied scattered in all directions—some running for water, some for brandy, some for one thing and some for another, till there was scarcely one left in the church. The service was, of course, instantly stopped; and my beloved was, in the meantime, very tenderly supported by the arms of the stranger; for such he was to me at any rate, although by no means so either to the lady herself or to her friends. I was, as you may well believe, all astonishment and amazement at this extraordinary scene, and could not at all conceive what it meant; but it was not long before I was very fully informed on this head. To return, however, in the meantime, to the lady. On recovering from her fainting fit, the stranger, who had been all along contemplating her with a look of the most tender affection, asked her, in a gentle voice, "If she would still continue true to him." And, gentlemen, she answered, though in a voice scarcely

audible, "Yes;" and, immediately after, the two walked out of the church arm in arm, in spite of the remonstrances and even threats of myself and my friends—leaving us, and me in particular, to such reflections on the uncertainty of all human events as the circumstance which had just occurred was calculated to excite. In three weeks after, the stranger and Jessie were married. Who he was is soon explained. He had been a favoured lover of Jessie's some seven years before, and had gone abroad, where it was believed he had died, there having been no word from him during the greater part of that period. How this was explained I never knew; but that he was not dead, you will allow was now pretty clearly established.

Now, gentlemen (added our little friend), I have brought my mishaps up to the present date. What may be still in store for me, I know not; but I have now brought myself to the peaceful and most comfortable condition of having no hopes of succeeding in anything, and therefore am freed, at least, from all liability to the pains of disappointment." And here ended the story of the little hump-backed gentleman in the bright yellow waistcoat.

We all felt for his disappointments, and wished him better luck.

The person to whose turn it came next to entertain us, was a quiet, demure looking personage, of grave demeanour, but of mild and pleasant countenance. His gravity, we thought, partook a little of melancholy; and he was, in consequence, recognised generally in the house by the title of the melancholy gentleman. He was, however, very far from being morose; indeed, on the contrary, he was exceedingly kind and gentle in his manner, and would not, I am convinced, have harmed the meanest insect that crawls, let alone his own species.

"Well, gentlemen," said this person, on being informed that it was his turn to divert us with some story or other,

"I will do the best I can to entertain you, and will follow the example of my unfortunate predecessor of the evening, by choosing a subject of something of a personal nature."

"To begin, then, my friends," went on the melancholy gentleman—"I do not, I think, arrogate too much when I say that I am as peaceable and peace-loving a man as ever existed. I have always abhorred strife and wrangling; and never knowingly or willingly interfere in any way with the affairs of my neighbours or of others. I would, in short, at any time, rather sacrifice my interests than quarrel with any one; while I reckon it the greatest happiness to be let alone, and to be allowed to get through the world quietly and noiselessly. From my very infancy, my friends (said the melancholy gentleman), I loved quiet above all things; and there is a tradition in our family, strikingly corroborative of this. The tradition alluded to bears that I never cried while an infant, and that I never could endure my rattle. Well, gentlemen, such were and such still are my dispositions. But, offending no one, and interfering with no one, how have I been treated in my turn? You shall hear.

At school, I was thrashed by the master for not interfering to prevent my companions fighting; and I was thrashed by my companions for not taking part in their quarrels: so that, between them, I had, I assure you, a very miserable life of it. However, these were but small matters, compared to what befell me after I had fairly embarked in the world.

My first experience after this, of how little my peaceful and inoffensive disposition would avail me, was with an evening club which I joined. For some time I got on very well with the persons who composed this association, and seemed—at least I thought so—to be rather a favourite with them, on account of my quiet and peaceable demeanour; and, under ordinary circumstances, perhaps I might

have continued so. But the demon of discord got amongst them, and I became, in consequence of my non-resisting qualities, the scapegoat of their spleen; or rather, I became the safety-valve by which their passions found a harmless egress. But, to drop metaphor, my friends (said the melancholy gentleman), the club got to loggerheads on a certain political question—I forget now what it was—and for some nights there was a great deal of angry discussion and violent altercation on the subject. In these debates, however, in accordance with my natural disposition, I took no part whatever, except by making some fruitless attempts to abate the resentment of the parties, by thrusting in a jocular remark or so, when anything particularly severe was said. Well, gentlemen, how was I rewarded for this charitable conduct, think you? Why, I'll tell you.

On the third or fourth night, I think it was, of the discussion alluded to, a member got up and said, addressing the club—"My friends, a good deal of vituperation and opprobrious language has been used in this here room, regarding the question we have been discussing these three or four nights back; but we have all spoke our minds freely, and stood to it like men who isn't afeard to speak their sentiments anywhere. Now, I says that's what I likes. I likes a man to stand to his tackle. But I hates, as I do the devil, your snakes in the grass, your smooth-chopped fellows, who hears all and never says nothing, so as how you can't tell whether he is fish or flesh. I say, I hate such dastardly, sneaking fellows, who won't speak out; and I says that such are unfit for this company;" (here the speaker looked hard at me); "and I move that he be turned out directly, neck and heel."

Well, this speech, my friends (went on the melancholy gentleman), which you will perceive was levelled at me, was received with a shout of applause by both parties. The ruffing and cheering was immense; and most laudably

prompt was the execution of the proposal that excited it. Before I had time to evacuate the premises quietly and of my own accord, which I was about to do, I was seized by the breast by a tall ferocious-looking fellow, who sat next me, and who was immediately aided by three or four others, and dragged over every obstacle that stood in the way to the door, out of which I was finally kicked with particular emphasis.

Such, then, my friends (said the melancholy gentleman), was the first most remarkable instance of the benefits I was likely to derive from my inoffensive non-meddling disposition. However, it was my nature; and neither this unmerited treatment, nor any other usage which I afterwards experienced, could alter it.

Some time after this, I connected myself with a certain congregation in our town, and it unfortunately happened that, soon after I joined them, they came all to sixes and sevens about a minister. One party was for a Mr. Triterite, the other a Mr. White. These were distinguished, as usual, in such and similar cases, by the adjunct *ite*, which had, as you may perceive, a most unhappy effect in the case of the name of the first gentleman, whose followers were called Triteriteites, and those of the other Whiteites. However, this was but a small matter. To proceed. In the squabbles alluded to, gentlemen, I took no part; it being a matter of perfect indifference to me which of the candidates had the appointment. All that I desired was, that I might be let alone, and not be called upon to interfere in any way in the dispute. But would they allow me this indulgence, think you? No, not they. They resolved, seemingly, that my unobtrusive conduct should be no protection to me. Two or three days after the commencement of the contest, I was waited upon by a deputation from a committee of the Triteriteites, and requested to join them in opposing the Whiteites. This I civilly declined; telling

them, at the same time, that it was my intention and my earnest wish to avoid all interference in the pending controversy; that I was perfectly indifferent to which of the candidates the church was given, and would be very glad to become a hearer of either of them; that, in short, I wished to make myself no enemies on account of any such contest.

"Oh, very well, Mr. B——," said the spokesman, reddening with anger, "we understand all this perfectly, and think very little, I assure you, of such mean evasive conduct. Had you said boldly and at once that you favoured the other party, we would at least have given you credit for honesty. But you may depend upon it, sir," he added, "White never will get the church. That you may rely upon."

"Scurvy conduct," muttered another of the committee, as he was retiring after the speaker.

"Shabby, sniveling, *drivelling* conduct," muttered a third.

"Low, mean, *sneaking* conduct," said a fourth.

"Dirty subterfuge," exclaimed a fifth. And off the gentlemen went.

But they had not yet done with me. One of the number was a person with whom I had some acquaintance, and the next day I received from him the following note:—"Sir, your unmanly (I will not mince the matter with you), your unmanly and disengenuous conduct yesterday, when called upon by Mr. Triterite's committee, has so disgusted me that I beg you to understand that we are friends no longer. A candid and open avowal of opposite sentiments from those which I entertain, I trust, I shall be always liberal enough to tolerate in any one, without prejudice to previous intimacy; but I cannot remain on terms of friendship with a man who has the meanness to seek to conciliate the party he opposes, by concealing his adherence to that which he has espoused.—I am, sir," &c.

Well, my friends (said the melancholy gentleman), was not this an extremely hard case? To be thus abused, and reviled, and scouted, for merely desiring to be allowed to live in peace, and to have nothing to do with a squabble in which I did not feel in any way interested. But this was not all. I was lampooned, caricatured, and paragraphed in the newspapers, in a thousand different ways. In the first, I was satirized as the *fair* dealer; in the second, I was represented as a wolf in sheep's clothing; and in the last, I was hinted at as "a certain quiet double-faced gentleman, not a hundred miles from hence."

But still this was not all. Two or three days after I had been waited on by the Triteriteites, the same honour was done me by the Whiteites, and with similar views. To the gentlemen of this party, I said precisely what I had said to those of the opposite faction, and begged of them, in heaven's name, to let me alone, and settle the matter amongst them as they best could.

"Well," replied one of the gentlemen, when I had done, "I must say, I did not expect this of you, Mr. B. I thought I could have reckoned on your support; but it doesn't signify. We can secure Mr. White's appointment without you. But I must say, if you had been the candid man I took you for, you would have told me, ere this, that you meant to have supported the other party. I really cannot think very highly, Mr. B., of your conduct in this matter; but it doesn't signify, sir—it doesn't signify. We now know who are our friends and who are not. Mr. Triterite, you may depend upon it, will never get the church, even though he has you to support him." Saying this, he turned on his heel and left me, followed by his train, who, precisely as the others had done, muttered as they went, "shabby fellow," "mean scamp," "shuffling conduct," "snake in the grass" (favourite phrase this), &c. &c.

Well, my friends, here you see (said the melancholy

gentleman), without giving any one the smallest offence, and desiring nothing so much as peace and the good will of my neighbours—here was I, I say, become obnoxious to heaven knows how many people; for my reputation naturally extended from the committees to the other members of the congregation, and from them again to their friends and acquaintances; so that I had, in the end, a pretty formidable array of enemies. The consequence of this affair was, that I soon found myself compelled, from the petty persecutions and annoyances of all sorts, to which I was subsequently exposed, to leave the congregation altogether. However, to compensate for all these troubles and vexations, I had the good fortune, about this time, to become acquainted with a very amiable young lady, as peaceably inclined and as great a lover of quiet as myself. This lady I married, having previously secured a house in one of the quietest and most retired places in the town, so as to be out of the way of all noise and din. Immediately beneath this house, however, there was an empty unlet shop, which I could not help regarding with a suspicious eye, from an apprehension that it might be taken by a person of some noisy calling or other; and so much at last did this fear alarm me, that I determined on taking the shop into my own hands, and running myself the risk of its letting—thus securing the choice of a tenant. Having come to this resolution, then, I called upon the landlord and inquired the rent.

"O sir," said he, "the shop is let."

"Let, sir!" replied I; "I saw a ticket on it yesterday."

"That might well be, sir, for it was only let this morning."

"And to whom, sir, is it let, may I ask? I mean, sir, what is his business?"

"A tinsmith, sir," said the landlord, coolly.

"A tinsmith!" replied I, turning pale. "Then my worst fears are realized!"

The landlord looked surprised, and inquired what I meant. I told him, and had a laugh from him for my pains.

Yes, my friends (said the melancholy gentleman), a tinsmith had taken the shop—a working tinsmith—and a most industrious and hard-working one he was, to my cost. But this was not the worst of it. The tinsmith was not a week in his new shop, when he received a large West India order; and when I mention that this piece of good fortune, as I have no doubt he reckoned it, compelled him to engage about a score of additional hands, I may safely leave it to yourselves, gentlemen, to conceive what sort of a neighbourhood I soon found myself in. On this subject, then, I need only say, that, in less than a week thereafter, I was fairly hammered out of the house, and compelled to look out for other quarters. But this, after all, was merely a personal matter—one which did not involve the inimical feelings of others towards me; and, therefore, though an inconvenience at the time, it did not disturb my quiet beyond the moment of suffering, as those unhappy occurrences did in which I had, however unwittingly, provoked the enmity of others; and, therefore, after I had been fairly settled in my new house, I thought very little more about the matter, and was beginning to enjoy the calm, quiet life which I so much loved, as nobody had meddled with me for upwards of three weeks. But, alas! this felicity was to be but of short duration. The election of a member of Parliament came on, and I had a vote—but I had determined to make no use of it; for, being but little of a politician, and, above all things, desiring to be on good terms with everybody, whatever might be their religious or political persuasions, I thought the best way for me was to take no share whatever in the impending contest; it being a mere matter of moonshine to me whether Whig or Tory

was uppermost. In adopting this neutral course, I expected, and I think not unreasonably, to get quietly through with the matter, and that I should avoid giving offence to any one. I will further confess, that, besides this feeling, I was guided to a certain extent by interest. I had many customers of opposite political tenets—Whig, Tory, and Radical—and I was desirous of retaining the custom and good will of them all, by taking part with none. Grievous error—dreadful mistake!

Soon after, the candidates started, and there happened to be one of each of the three classes just mentioned—that is, Whig, Tory, and Radical. I received a card from one of my best customers, a Whig, containing a larger order than usual for tea, wine, spirits, &c.—such being the articles in which I deal, gentlemen (said our melancholy friend); but, at the bottom of the slip, there was the following note:—"Mr. S—— hopes he may count on Mr. B.'s supporting the Liberal interest in the ensuing election, by giving his vote to Lord Botherem. Mr. S—— is perfectly aware of Mr. B.'s indifference to political matters; but it is on this very account that Mr. S—— reckons on his support, as it can be a matter of no moment to him to whom he gives his vote."

Well, gentleman, here you see was the first attack upon me; and the second soon followed. I saw the storm that was gathering. In the course of the very same day, I was waited on by another customer, an inveterate Tory.

"Well, Mr. B.," he said, on entering my shop, "I am come to solicit a very important favour from you; but still one which I am sure you will not refuse an old friend and a tolerably good customer. In short, Mr. B.," he went on, "knowing it is a matter of moonshine to you who is member for this burgh—for I've heard you say so—I have come to ask your vote for Mr. Blatheringham, the Tory candidate."

"My dear sir," I replied, "you are quite right in saying that it is a matter of moonshine to me what may be the political tenets of our member; but I have resolved—and I have done so for that very reason—not to interfere in the matter at all. I do not mean to vote on any side." And I laughed; but my friend looked grave.

"Oh! you don't, Mr. B.!" he said. "Then am I to understand that you won't oblige me in this matter, although it is on a point which is of no consequence to you, on your own confession, and, therefore, requiring no sacrifice of political principle."

"My dear sir," replied I, in the mildest and most conciliating manner possible, anxious to turn away wrath—"I have already said"——

"Oh! I know very well, sir, what you have said, and I'll recollect it, too, you may depend upon it, and not much to your profit. My account's closed with you, sir. Good morning!" And out of the shop he went in a furious passion. On the day following this, I received a note from the Whig canvasser, in reply to one from me on the subject of *his* solicitation, in which I had expressed nearly the same sentiments which I delivered verbally to my Tory friend: and in this note I was served with almost precisely the same terms which the Tory had used in return, only he carried the matter a little farther—telling me plainly that he would not only withdraw his own custom from me, but do his endeavour to deprive me of the custom of those of his friends who dealt with me, who were of the same polical opinions with himself. This I thought barefaced enough; and I daresay you will agree with me, my friends (said the melancholy gentleman), that it was so.

Here then, were two of my best customers lost to me for ever. Nay, not only their own custom, but that of all their political partisans who happened to deal with me; for the one was fully as good as his word, and the other a great

deal better: that is to say, the one who threatened to deprive me of the custom of his friends, as well as his own, did so most effectually; while the other, who held out no such threat, did precisely the same thing by his friends, and with at least equal success.

In truth, I wanted now but to be asked to support the Radical interest to be fairly ruined; and this was a piece of good fortune that was not long denied me. "My dear Bob," —thus commenced a note, which I had, on this unhappy occasion, from an intimate friend, a rattling, rough, outspoken fellow—"As I know your political creed to be couched in the phrase—'Let who likes be king, I'll be subject'—that is, you don't care one of your own figs what faction is uppermost—I request, as a personal favour, your support for Mr. Sweepthedecks; and this I do the more readily, that I know there is no chance of your being pre-engaged. Now, you musn't refuse me, Bob, else you and I will positively quarrel; for I have promised to secure you."

Here then, you see, my friends (said the melancholy gentleman), was a climax. The unities in the system of persecution adopted against me were strictly observed. There was beginning, middle, and end complete—nothing wanting. Well—still determined to maintain my neutrality—I wrote a note to my friend, expressing precisely the same sentiments to which I have so often alluded. To this note I received no answer; and can only conjecture the effect it had upon him by the circumstance of his withdrawing his custom from me, and never again entering my shop.

Observe, however, my friends (here said the melancholy gentleman), that, in speaking of the persecutions I underwent on this occasion, I have merely selected instances—you are by no means to understand that the cases just mentioned included all the annoyance I met with on the

subject of my vote. Not at all. I have, as already said, merely instanced these cases. I was assailed by scores of others in the same way. Indeed, there was not a day, for upwards of three weeks, that I was not badgered and abused by somebody or other—ay, and that too, in my own shop. But my shop was now not worth keeping; for Whig, Tory, and Radical had deserted me, and left me to the full enjoyment of my reflections on the course I had pursued. In short, I found that, in endeavouring to offend no one, I had offended everybody; and that, in place of securing my own peace, I had taken the most effectual way I possibly could to make myself unhappy.

Well, in the meantime, you see, my friends (continued the melancholy gentleman), the election came on, and was gained by the Whig candidate. The streets were on the occasion paraded by the partisans of each of the parties; and, as is not unusual in such cases, there was a great deal of mischief done, and of which, as a sufferer, I came in for a very liberal share. The Whig mob attacked my shop, and demolished everything in it, to celebrate their triumph, as they said, by plucking a *hen*—in other words, one who would not support them. The Tory mob, again, attacked my house, and smashed every one of my windows, alleging that, as I was not a Tory, I must be a Whig; and, finally, the third estate came in, and finished what the other two had left undone, because I was not a Radical.

Here, then, gentlemen, was I, I repeat, who had offended no one, or, at least, had given no one any reasonable grounds of offence, but who, on the contrary, was most anxious to remain on friendly terms with everybody—here, I say, then, was I, surrounded with enemies, persecuted at all hands, my business dwindled away to nothing, and, lastly, my effects destroyed, to the extent of nearly all I possessed in the world. There was still, however, a small residue left; and with this I now determined to retire

to the country, and to take a small house in some sequestered place, at a distance from all other human habitations, with the view of ascertaining if I could not there secure the peace and quietness which I found the most harmless and inoffensive conduct could not procure me in society. I determined, in short, to fly the face of man. Well, such a house as I wished, I, after some time, found; and to it I immediately retired. It was situated in a remote part of the country, in a romantic little glen, and several miles distant, on all hands, from any other residence—just the thing I wanted. Here at last, thought I, as I gazed on the solitude around me, I will find that peace and quiet that are so dear to me; here is no one to quarrel with me because I do not choose to think as he does—none to disturb me because I seek to disturb no one. Fatal error again!

There was a small trouting stream at a short distance from the house. I was fond of angling. I went to the river with rod and line, threw in (it was the very next day after I had taken possession of my new residence), and in the next instant found myself seized by the cuff of the neck. I had trespassed; and an immediate prosecution, notwithstanding all the concession I could make, was the consequence. The proprietor, at whose instance this proceeding took place, was a brute—a tyrant. To all my overtures, his only reply was, that he was determined to make an example of me; and this he did, to the tune of about a score of pounds. This occurrence, of course, put an immediate stop to my fishing recreations; and, at the same time, excited some suspicion in my mind as to the perfect felicity which I was likely to enjoy in my retirement. Having given up all thoughts of angling, I now took to walking, and determined to make a general inspection of the country in my neighbourhood; taking one direction one day, and another the next, and so on, till I should have seen all

around me to the extent of some miles—"And surely this," thought I to myself, "will give offence to nobody." Well, in pursuance of this resolution, I started on my first voyage of discovery; but had not proceeded far, when a beautiful shady avenue, with its gate flung invitingly open, tempted me to diverge. I entered it, and was sauntering luxuriously along, with my hat in my hand, enjoying the cool shade of the lofty umbrageous trees by which it was skirted, and admiring the beauties around me—for it was, indeed, a most lovely place. I was, in short, in a kind of delightful reverie, when all of a sudden I found myself again seized by the cuff of the neck, by a ferocious-looking fellow with a gun in his hand.

"What do you want here, sir?" said the savage, looking at me as if he would have torn me to pieces.

"Nothing, my good fellow," replied I, mildly. "I want nothing. I came here merely to enjoy a walk in this beautiful avenue."

"Then, you'll pay for your walk, I warrant you. Curse me, if you don't! You have no right here, sir. Didn't you see the ticket at the entrance, forbidding all strangers to come here?"

I declared I did not; which was true.

"Then I'll teach you to look sharper next time. Your name, sir?"

I gave it; and, in three days after, was served with a summons for another trespass, and was again severely fined.

"Strange land of liberty this!" thought I on this occasion—as, indeed, I had done on some others before—"where one dare not think as they please without making a host of enemies, and where you can neither turn to the right or the left without being taken by the neck."

I now, in short, found, gentlemen (said our melancholy friend), that I had only exchanged one scene of troubles

for another; and that even my remote and sequestered situation was no protection to me whatever from annoyance and persecution; and I therefore resolved to quit and return once more to the town, to make another trial of the justice of mankind; and in this resolution I was confirmed by a letter which I shortly after this received from the proprietor whose lands adjoined the small patch of ground that was attached to the house I resided in.

"Sir," began this new correspondent, "you must be aware that it is the business of the tenant of the house you occupy to keep the drain which passes your garden in an efficient state, throughout the length of its passage by your ground. Now, sir, it is, at present, far from being in such a condition; and the consequence is, that a large portion of my land in your neighbourhood is laid under water, to my serious loss. I therefore request that you will instantly see to this, to prevent further trouble. I am, sir," &c.

Well, gentlemen (continued our melancholy friend), to prevent this further trouble, and to keep, if possible, on goods terms with my neighbour, I went, immediately on receipt of his letter, and examined the drain in question; resolving, at the same time, to do what he requested, or rather commanded, if it could be done at a reasonable cost, although I conceived that it was a matter with which I had nothing to do. It was an affair of my landlord's altogether, I thought, especially as nothing had been said to me about the drain when I took the house—at least nothing that I recollected. However, as I have said, I determined, for peace's sake, to repair it in the meantime, and to take my landlord in my own hand for restitution. On looking at the drain, I found it indeed in a very bad state, and immediately sent for a person skilled in such matters to give me an idea of what might be the cost of putting it in a proper order; and was informed that it might be put in

very good condition, in such a state as my neighbour could not object to, for about fifty pounds. Now, gentlemen, this was precisely equal to two years' rent of my house, and, I thought, rather too large a price to pay for the good will of my neighbour; and I resisted, at the same time referring him to my landlord. My landlord said he had nothing to do with it, and that I must settle the affair with Mr. T—— the best way I could. Well, I took advice in the matter, for I thought it looked very like a conspiracy against my simplicity and good nature; and was advised by all means to resist. The result was, that my neighbour, Mr. T——, immediately commenced a suit against me; and, in my own defence, I was compelled to raise an action of relief against my landlord; so that, when I returned to town, I brought with me from my sweet, calm, peaceable retirement, a couple of full-blown law pleas of the most promising dimensions. Who would have thought it—who would have dreamt it—that, in this seclusion, this desert, as I may call it, I should have got involved in such a world of troubles? Well, gentlemen, what do you think was the result? Why, both cases were given against me. In the one, I had to pay costs—and in the other, to pay costs and repair the drain too; and (added the melancholy gentleman with a sigh) I am at this moment on my way to Edinburgh to pay the last instalment of these ruinous and iniquitious claims." And, with this, the melancholy gentleman ended the sad story of his sufferings.

We all pitied him from our hearts, and each in his own way offered him the condolence that his case demanded.

He thanked us for the sympathy we expressed, and said that he felt encouraged by it to ask our advice as to how he should conduct himself in future, so as to obtain the peace and quiet he so earnestly desired.

"What would you recommend me to do, gentlemen—where would you advise me to go," he said, in an implor-

ing and despairing tone—nay, we thought half crying—"to escape this merciless and unprovoked persecution?"

We were all much affected by this piteous appeal, and felt every desire to afford such counsel to our ill-used friend as might be of service to him; but, while we did so, we felt also the extreme difficulty of the case; for we did not see by what possible line of conduct he could escape persecution, if the very harmless and inoffensive one which he had hitherto, of his own accord, adopted, had been found ineffectual for his protection.

Indeed, it was the very, nay, the only one, which, *a priori*, we would have recommended to him; but, as he had clearly shown us that it was an ineffectual one, we really felt greatly at a loss what to say; and, under this difficulty, we all remained for some time thoughtful and silent. At length, however, it was agreed amongst us, as the case was a poser, that we should sleep on the matter, and in the morning come prepared with such advice as our intervening cogitations should suggest.

The melancholy gentleman again thanked us for the kind interest we took in his unhappy case; adding, that he was now so disheartened, so depressed in spirits, by the usage he had met with, that he almost felt it an obligation to be allowed to live.

As it was now wearing late, and our landlord had just come in to announce that supper was ready, and would be served up when ordered, we agreed to rest satisfied for the night with the extempore autobiographies, as I may call them, of our two worthy companions—the little hunchbacked personage in the bright yellow waistcoat, and the melancholy gentleman; but we, at the same time, resolved that we would resume the same mode of entertainment on the following evening, and continue it till every one had contributed his quota.

GUILTY, OR NOT GUILTY.

On the 15th of September, 17—, an unusual stir was observable in our village. The people were gathered in little groups in the streets, with earnest and awe-stricken countenances; and even the little children had ceased their play, and, clinging to their mothers, looked up as if wondering what strange thing had happened. In some parts of the town the crowds were larger, but the remarks less audible; at times, two or three individuals were seen passing along, in grave conversation, while the women stood in groups at their own or their neighbour's doors, many of them with tears in their eyes, and giving utterance occasionally to sounds of lamentation. It was evident, to the most casual observer, that something unusual had occurred—something that had stricken a feeling approaching to alarm into all hearts—and that all were engaged in the discussion of one common topic. There was that gathering together, as if for mutual support, or for the purposes of sympathy and consultation, which usually attends the appearance of public danger, the extent of which is unknown. It seemed, indeed, as if the occurrence of an earthquake, however much it might have increased the alarm, could not have deepened the gloom. The night at length gradually thickened, and, one by one, the villagers crept into their dwellings. Many a fearful tale was told by the fire-sides that night; and not a door but was more carefully barred than it had been perhaps for years before.

Our village was like many other villages in Scotland: it was long, dirty, and irregular, and wholly wanting in those qualities of neatness and taste which give a character

of comfort and rustic beauty to the generality of English hamlets. The odour that rose from the fronts of the cottages was not from flowers, and was certainly much less agreeable to the senses. The situation, however, was romantic; and there was a character of rusticity about the place which harmonised well with the surrounding scenery. On one side it was skirted by a water, which, in rainy seasons, struggled into some importance, and turned two or three respectable mills. On the other, the country undulated gracefully, and rose at one point into a wooded hill, which formed no inconsiderable feature in the landscape. Striking off the main road, at a point about half-a-mile distant, was a rough by-road, which crossed near the summit of the hill, and wound upwards till it disappeared in a ridge of still loftier mountains. This road formed a favourite walk with the young people of the village. It was rough, and shaded, and retired, and led to many a green spot and glorious upland. On very dark nights, however, it was usually avoided. A considerable part of it was overarched with thick foliage; and however pleasant at noonday, when the hot breezes came panting thither for relief, it needed rather a stout heart to pass whistling through it, when not even a gleam of starlight was visible, and when every sound of the rustling branches came to the ear of the listener, as a groan, a shriek, or a wailing.

It was towards this road, on the morning succeeding the ominous appearances we have described, that many of the villagers directed their steps. A good number were hastening thither soon after daybreak, and one and all seemed bent on the same errand. They entered the road, now bequered with the wakening glints of the sun, and proceeded onwards till they came to a break in the rough wall, which bounded it on either side. They here struck off, and followed the windings of a narrow footpath, till they reached an open place which looked into the fields

beyond. There was a bush of underwood a good deal dashed and torn; and those who had a better eyesight, or a more active fancy than the rest, declared they could trace the sprinklings of blood upon the grass. On that spot, not many hours before, a murder had been committed. A young woman, one of the loveliest and liveliest of the village, had been desperately and cruelly murdered.

The affair was involved in mystery.

Jessie Renton, the deceased, was the daughter of respectable parents in the village, and a favourite with young and old. She was warm-hearted and playful; and, pass her when you might, she always greeted you with a kind glance or a merry word. On the evening which closed on her for ever, she had gone out alone, as she had done a thousand times before, with a laughing eye and a light step. Her father had not returned from his daily toil, and her mother had not ceased from hers. The latter was busy at her wheel when Jessie left, and not a parting word was exchanged between them. They knew not that they were never to see each other alive again in this world, and they parted without thought or word. It was not known where the unfortunate girl had gone. She had passed the doctor's shop while his apprentice boy was squirting water from a syringe; and, joking, she had told him she would "tell his maister o' his tricks." She had chatted with two girls who were fetching water from the well, and hinted something about an approaching wedding. An old man had seen her at the outskirts of the village; and a cow-herd urchin thought—but "wasna sure"—that he had seen her entering the road leading through the wood; and that was all. Some hours after she had been thus traced, a couple of strolling pedlars had been making for the village, and were startled by a shriek and a cry of murder in the thicket. They rushed in; but had some difficulty in finding the spot whence the cry proceeded. The figure of a man dashed by them at

some yards distance. They hallooed to him; but he passed on, and was out of sight in a moment. A few stifled cries led them to the fatal spot, where they found the wretched girl stretched upon the ground, faint from the loss of blood, and unable to articulate. One of the men supported her, while the other ran for help. The latter had scarcely reached the main road, when he met some labourers plodding homewards, and with them he returned to the dying girl; but what assistance could they render? Life was fast ebbing away; and, in a few moments afterwards, they bent in dumb horror and amazement, over a mangled corpse. After some consultation, they carried the body towards the village; and one of them hastened before and procured a vehicle to relieve them of their burthen. The news of what had occurred spread in all directions; and, by the time the mournful procession entered the village, the inhabitants were all astir. The body was soon recognised; tears and wailings followed; and dark suspicions and dismal regrets mingled with the hurried inquiries of every new comer.

Old James Renton and his wife, as decent a couple as lived in the village, were seated by the fire, enjoying their quiet evening chat, when the awful intelligence reached them. Some considered it strange that they had been talking but a few minutes before of their daughter, and her prospects. But it was not strange: they had no other child: they had had no other theme so interesting. It was not a new thing with them. For themselves they had but little to hope, but little to dream over: their own ambition had long since died out, but it revived in their child. She was a link which bound them anew to this world, and seemed to open up to them, once more, bright prospects on this side of the grave. Often and often had they conversed upon her hopes, as they had aforetime done of their own; and with an interest only heightened

from having become less selfish. Was it remarkable that they should do so on that evening? Jessie was growing to a most interesting age. She had arrived at that point in life from which many roads diverge, and where the path is often difficult to choose. For her sake, more than one homely hind had become a poet in his feelings. Indeed, she had many admirers, and was even what some might call a flirt. But, although her smiles were shed like the free and glad sunshine on all, there was one who, to appearance, was more favoured than the rest. This young man had known her from her childhood, and his attachment was of the most ardent kind. At school, he had been her champion, and certainly showed himself a true knight—ready to encounter, nay, courting danger for her sake, and conceiving himself sufficiently rewarded by her smile. She had recently been solicited in marriage by another, a man of retired and somewhat gloomy habits, who dwelt near; but it was understood that she had refused his offer, and that George Merrideth was the chosen one of her heart.

It was on these things that the unconscious parents were conversing, when one of their neighbours entered with the frightful intelligence. Both started up and rushed to the door. The crowd were hastening on, bearing with them the melancholy evidence of the truth of what they had just heard. It came on still—it stopt—it was at their own door it stopt. The old man could not speak, but his wife rushed forward with a distressful shriek. The truth was soon all known. They had no child. They had only a dead body to weep over—to lay in the grave. Is it necessary to say more? A few days passed. They were the bitterest days the bereaved parents had ever known; but they passed, and their minds became comparatively calm. Neither the efforts of their own minds, nor the commiseration of their friends and neighbours, could sub-

due their grief: but it took free vent, and subsided from very exhaustion. They evinced but little anxiety to discover who had destroyed their child: it was enough to them that she was gone; and revenge, they said, would not bring her back. Their chief solace was to visit and linger in the church-yard—their chief hope to abide there.

To discover the murderer, and drag him to justice, soon occupied the attention, not only of the authorities, but of many active men in the village. Rigorous inquiries were instituted, every scrap of evidence was collected, and suspicion fell at length upon one man. This individual was, to appearance, about thirty years of age, of a thoughtful disposition, and retired mode of life. He had been settled in the village for several years; and no sooner was the suspicion raised, than many circumstances were bruited to confirm it. His general conduct and bearing were remarked to have been mysterious. He had rarely associated with his neighbours; and had often been observed, in lonely places and at silent hours, muttering and musing, by himself. For some time back, he had been noticed watching the deceased, and following her whenever she had any distance to go; and the general belief was, that she had crossed his affections, and that he had taken this cowardly revenge. On the evening of the murder, he had been seen returning home only a few minutes after the time when the deed must have been perpetrated, and his air and manner were said to have been wild and agitated. The consequence was, that he was apprehended and thrown into prison. In a few months afterwards, he was tried. In his defence, he stated that the unfortunate girl had rather encouraged his suit than otherwise; and mentioned, in proof of this, that Merrideth, whose grief for her loss had excited general commiseration, had on the very afternoon of the day on which the murder took place, quarrelled him on the subject, and accused him of seeking him to

supplant him in her affections. Ultimately, a verdict of not proven was returned, and he was dismissed from the court.

Jones—for such was his name—returned to the village; but the suspicion still clung to him. As he went through the streets, the people avoided him, or gazed at him as a world's wonder. Wherever he passed, they spoke to each other in whispers. These whispers he seldom heard, but the thought of their import haunted him. He was restless and unhappy, and sought relief in motion. No sooner was the sun risen, than he was up and away to the fields. He wandered about alone for hours, and then came back to the village. He felt as if a curse rested on him; a stain on his name, which he could not wipe off. So unhappy did he seem, that some men began to take compassion on him, and even to converse with him. He felt grateful; the tears rushed to his eyes; and they left him with their suspicions confirmed. Night came, and he felt that he could not sleep. He sometimes tried to read, but in vain: and would suddenly dash down the book and hurry into the street.

In one of his rambles, an incident occurred, which, although trifling in itself, may yet be related as showing the kind of feeling with which he was regarded. Miss Manners, the daughter of the village clergyman, accompanied by another young lady, was coming along in a direction in which they could not avoid meeting him. Jones observed the latter hesitate, on beholding him, and apparently refuse to go on, till encouraged by her companion. They met, however, and passed each other; but Jones had not proceeded many yards, when he observed a silk bag which one of them had dropped. He picked it up and hastened after them. The young lady, on hearing his footsteps, glanced round and screamed outright. Jones paused. When the affrighted damsel had somewhat recovered herself, he said in a soft voice—

"Young lady! I am sorry if my politeness has alarmed you. I thought this might be your bag, which I found lying on the road."

Miss Manners stepped towards him, and received it, saying—"Thank you, sir. My companion is foolish."

"I cannot blame her," he replied, "for she does not know me. I have rather to thank you, than wonder at her."

His voice was rather tremulous as he spoke; and Miss Manners regarded him with a look of the tenderest compassion. Nothing more, however, was said. They simply bowed to each other and parted. Jones walked on for a short distance, then, leaning over a rustic gate by the roadside, mused till his eyes filled.

The violent emotion exhibited by the unhappy man was not allowed to pass unnoticed by the villagers. It was looked upon only as the writhing of a tortured spirit; and whatever doubts existed as to his guilt, they were soon all removed. There was hardly a soul in the village but shunned and feared him.

Sometimes Jones would drop into one or two shops where he had been accustomed to visit, and talk freely on matters of common interest. But those who formerly saw nothing odd in his manner, now discovered a thousand peculiarities. They imagined they detected an unnatural wildness in his eye, and set him down as a deep and dangerous man. At one time the villagers would stand gazing after him, at others they would pass him with a scowl. Little children, whom he used sometimes to pat on the head were taught to fear and avoid him; and often, when he approached, would run away screaming to their homes.

The unhappy man, at length, resolved to leave the place. He pursued his journey to Edinburgh, and took lodgings in a street in the Old Town. The reflection, however, that he had not succeeded in vindicating his character—that he

had left behind him a blasted reputation—poisoned all his enjoyments. He walked backward and forward in Princes, Street, crossed the North Bridge, and wandered about the Canongate and High Street, and tried to lose himself in the crowd. Again he returned to his lodging, and felt that his loneliness and misery were increased.

He next set off for Glasgow, and pursued there the same course. He traversed the Trongate and Argyle Street for hours, and strode down to the Broomielaw, and stared vacantly at the bustle going on on the river. But in nothing could he take any interest. Change of scene could bring no change to his mind. Weeks and months were spent in this rambling and unsatisfactory life, and again he resolved to retrace his steps to the village.

The coach in which he took his seat set him down within about a mile and a half of the place; and he finished the journey on foot. It was on a Saturday afternoon that he entered, and with feelings which can hardly be described. Many of the villagers were sitting at their doors, enjoying the cool air of the evening, when the mysterious man walked up the main street. His appearance attracted general attention. One rumour had stated that he had fled to America; another, that he had taken away his own life. At all events, the people had congratulated themselves on his sudden departure; and felt irritated, as well as surprised, at his return. As he walked quietly along, he was followed by a number of boys, some of whom threw pieces of turf at him; and, by the time he reached the centre of the town a considerable crowd was collected. A disposition to riot was soon exhibited, and stones began to be thrown. Jones turned coolly round and folded his arms, as if in defiance of his persecutors. At that moment, a stone of a pretty large size struck him on the forehead, and some blood trickled from the wound. He was a man of a quick eye and muscular frame. He singled out the

person who threw it, and dashed through the crowd—never once losing sight of him until he had him firmly in his grasp. A struggle ensued, and Jones threw his opponent with great force on the ground. Loud threats, and angry imprecations followed; and "Villain!—Murderer!" burst from a hundred tongues. Ten or a dozen men sprang forward upon him at once; but he started back and eluded their grasp.

"Stand back!" he cried in a loud voice. "I shall strike the first man to the earth who dares to lay a finger on me!"

For a moment his pursuers were awed; but only for a moment. Two or three hands were in an instant at his throat, and a violent struggle and altercation ensued.

"Villain!—villain!" cried one man, older than the rest, "ye hae killed ane o' the sweetest bairns that ever drew breath. It was an evil hour when ye took up your abode in this village!"

"Hold off, old man!" exclaimed Jones; "why do you persecute me so?"

Groans and yells followed.

"I swear before God," he continued, shaking himself free, "that I am innocent of this crime!"

The crowd, however, were not to be deterred from giving vent to their rage; and matters might have proceeded to an alarming height, had not Mr. Manners, the parish minister, who chanced to be passing at the time, interfered in his behalf. The old man pushed his way through the crowd, and taking Jones by the arm, succeeded in dragging him away. They proceeded in the direction of the manse; but, as the mob still followed, Mr. Manners did not think it safe to leave him. He accordingly took him in along with him; and, closing the garden gate, exhorted the crowd to return peaceably to their homes.

For a few moments, some shouting and noise were

heard; but they died away by degrees, and Jones and his protector stood alone in the quiet and secluded garden. The former grasped Mr. Manners by the hand, and thanked him cordially.

"Sir," he said, "I have been sorely abused. An unhappy suspicion has clung to my name; but innocent I declare I am, although suffering the worst consequences of guilt. All men have some sins to weep for; but, as I shall answer to my Maker, I swear that I am as innocent of the great crime laid to my charge as the unborn child is."

Mr. Manners was a kind-hearted man. He was struck with the earnestness—the quiet and subdued fervour with which Jones addressed him—and, taking him kindly by the hand—

"Young man," he said, "I am bound to believe what I cannot disprove, and what you so solemnly affirm. If there be no truth in your words, you may yet repent having so solemnly sworn; but whether true or false, I can never repent doing you an act of kindness."

Jones was invited into the house to rest—an invitation which he gladly accepted. On entering the lobby, they were met by Miss Manners, who started involuntarily on beholding the stranger; but instantly recovered herself, and opened the door of the parlour for him to enter. The latter bowed politely to her; and, blushing, she returned the salutation. Her father desired her to walk in and set some wine upon the table, which she did with alacrity and grace.

Miss Manners was a young lady of rather an eccentric disposition. She was high-minded, and high-spirited, and not without a dash of romance. She was, of course, familiar with the story of the murder, and knew Jones well by sight. His appearance, which others regarded as at least mysterious-looking, seemed, in her eyes, rather prepossessing than otherwise; and when she heard the old

women in the village imprecating curses on his head, she had uniformly reproved them for judging without adequate proof. On the present occasion, there was something in Jones' looks and manner peculiarly calculated to confirm her good impression, and engage her sympathy. His collar was loosened, and his dress a good deal dashed by the rough treatment he had experienced; but the expression of his countenance seemed to plead for compassion, and spoke eloquently to her heart. She addressed him in a kindly tone of voice; inquired what was the matter, and hoped that no accident had occurred. The stranger put his hand to his brow, from which the blood had been previously wiped, and turned towards the window; while her father briefly explained the circumstances of their meeting, of the harsh treatment to which Jones had been subjected, and of his own interference.

"You did well father!" said the girl; "the people may be mistaken!"

"They *are* mistaken!" said Jones, turning round with moist eyes. "I know not why suspicion should have settled upon me. I led a quiet life in the village, harming no one, offending no one; neither had I exhibited any of those vices in which great crimes usually originate. I was not cruel, revengeful, or choleric: least of all had I shown unkindness to her whom they accuse me of having murdered. Lady, I cannot expect that you will believe the word of an accused, I may almost say a condemned, man; but I shall live in hope that something may yet arise to convince you that I am innocent!"

A reply rushed to her lips, but she checked it, and pressed the stranger to take some refreshment.

Mr. Manners expressed a hope that the people would not annoy him farther; and his daughter ventured to question him as to his returning to a place where he was exposed to such insult and persecution.

"Madam," he replied, "where else could I be happy, with such a stigma on my character? A man's evil deeds are always more widely trumpeted than his good ones; and go where I would, I know that the slander would follow me. I have taken a solemn vow, never again to leave this place till I can do so with an unsullied character. The feeling that makes a man eager to trace a calumny to its source, and exculpate himself in the eyes of the world, deters me from flying from reproach. No! I will meet my accusers boldly. I have done nothing to cause me to leave the place; and what others may say or do, will not drive me from it."

Both Mr. Manners and his daughter pressed him to stay to supper, but he declined. He expressed, as well as words could express, how grateful he felt for their kindness, and was about to depart, when the old gentleman laid one hand on his shoulder, and, grasping his hand frankly with the other, said—

"Till it has been proved that you are undeserving of my hospitality, my door shall always be open to you; and the more readily, that others are closed!"

Jones was a good deal affected, but struggled to conceal his emotion.

"No," he articulated, with a slightly faltering voice, but a steady eye, "I will not trouble you with a friendship which might bring odium on you. I need not say how delightful it would be to me; but"——

"My father," interrupted Miss Manners, "can easily bear a little burden to lighten another's great one. Can you not, father?"

"My good child," he replied, "you know me, and can speak for me. Sir," he added, "my good wishes and prayers attend you."

Jones took his leave, with many expressions of gratitude, when Mr. Manners came running after him, with his

hat on, to see whether the crowd had wholly dispersed, and resolved to accompany him if necessary. On reaching the road, however, it was discovered that everything was perfectly quiet; and the good man, having escorted him only a short distance on his way, left him to his reflections.

It would be difficult to describe the train of thought which passed through Jones' mind, as he directed his steps towards the centre of the village. Buoyant feelings and hopes, such as he had not experienced for years before, suddenly filled his breast: glimmerings of bright thought flashed on his mind; were speedily checked, and again burst forth. Some of the people were lounging about their doors as he passed; but he heeded not—he cared not. He felt happy. Visions of mild grey eyes and chesnut ringlets engrossed his senses. They were Miss Manners'. A low but sweet voice filled his ears. It was hers. His memory recalled certain kindly expressions; and it was her lips that had uttered them. On arriving at his lodging, he thought the way had been short; he entered, and was welcomed by his old landlady, with whom he had lived for years, and who was one of the few who would listen to nothing to his discredit.

That night, Jones sat up long, and thought much. The window of his room looked down upon the glen, the stream, the corn-mill, and across to the high and wooded banks, and upwards to where, on this particular night, the full round moon climbed, and threw a glittering bar of light upon the water; and never, to the eye of our lonely muser, looked so lonely, or shone upon so fair a scene. If, at that moment, he harboured an evil thought or an angry feeling, it soon melted in the rising tide of holier emotions. The quiet and softness of the night became, for the time, a portion of his own being; and the pale light, resting on his features, communicated to them much of its gentleness and beauty. For several hours he continued in deep

reverie. At length he began to feel chilly, as the thin watery light, which precedes the dawn, made its appearance; and he reluctantly withdrew to rest; but only to dream over the images of beauty with which his mind was surcharged.

Next morning broke forth—a benign and balmy Sabbath. He was the earliest at church, and lingered the latest in the church-yard. The subject of Mr. Manners' discourse was charity; but when the people came out, they passed by Jones with a scowl, and went on their several ways, talking mysteriously together. Jones, however, had again seen Miss Manners. It is uncertain whether or not he threw himself in her way; but, whether from design or accident, their eyes met. She bowed gracefully to him; but he was not prepared for this public recognition. For the moment he felt confused, his heart fluttered, and he passed on with two or three hurried steps. This incident, trifling as it was, deprived him of a whole night's sleep. He feared he had betrayed some awkwardness on the occasion; and yet, somehow or other, he had no fear of obtaining her forgiveness. Often and often he walked in the neighbourhood of the manse, avoiding being seen by her, but still seeing her; or, if not, indulging the delight of being near her. He had no heart to walk in any other direction. If he strolled out in the morning, or in the quiet of the evening, he proceeded almost instinctively towards the manse; and if he passed any distance beyond it, an irresistible impulse caused him to retrace his steps.

These lonely walks, often at unseasonable hours, and without any apparent object, were not unobserved by the villagers, and gave rise to much speculation. Many weeks passed, and still the mystery continued; and Jones found, ere long, that he was regarded not only with suspicion, but terror. All the petty crimes, too, which occurred in the neighbourhood, were set down to his charge; and time,

which he thought would clear his name, seemed only to blacken it the more. Every means, too, were taken to persecute him, and drive him from the place; but absence to him was now despair. He was chained to the spot by an uncontrollable destiny; and felt that, although pressed to the uttermost, he was yet wholly incapable of retreat.

Jones was proprietor of a small property in the village, which had been left him by an uncle, and which first induced him to take up his residence in that quarter; he had also a small sum of money laid out at interest; and, both together, had hitherto yielded him a sufficient competency.

One by one, however, the houses on which he chiefly relied became tenantless, and nothing seemed to await him but poverty and wretchedness.

But then Miss Manners! Like a star in the heavens, she became brighter as his prospects darkened; and yet he feared that, like a star, he could only admire her at a distance. He had told his love to the listening winds; he had whispered it to his pillow; he had mingled his plaint with that of the running brooks. But, to human ear, he had breathed it neither in sighs nor words. Him, a wanderer and an outcast, what maid could ever love? Could he have asked Miss Manners to share happiness with him, the case might have been otherwise; but what must be his fate when he had only wretchedness to offer? He thought of her till she became purely a being of his imagination; and, being all that his imagination could paint her, she became too much for him to hope ever to possess.

It is difficult to say what, at this early stage of their acquaintance, were Miss Manners' feelings towards Jones. Certain it is, however, that she had conceived for him a kind of romantic interest. She was eccentric in her disposition, but fervent in her attachments; and, without knowing much about him, she had, partly from compassion and

partly, perhaps, from a secret love of being regarded singular, uniformly advocated his cause whenever occasion offered.

One evening, two or three young girls were assembled at the manse. They were the daughters of a person of some consideration in the place, and Miss Manners' occasional associates. After tea, Mr. Manners withdrew to his studies; and, as the evening had set in rather cold, the ladies drew near the fire to converse.

"Come, now," said Miss Manners, as she stirred the fire till it blazed and crackled right merrily, "let us make ourselves comfortable and happy. Emily, here"—sitting down beside the dullest of her guests—"looks as sad as if she had just lost her sweetheart."

"Oh, she'll be thinking of Willie Green!" said another of the girls.

A third giggled. Emily looked sad; and Miss Manners cheered her by remarking that Willie was a very decent fellow.

"He's no sweetheart of mine," said Emily, indifferently, at the same time glancing up to the ceiling.

An enormous "Good gracious!" or some such expression, rushed to the eyes of another of the girls; but, as Miss Manners had checked her, she did not get telling how often she had seen her and Willie together, and how well known it was that the day was all but fixed.

"Now, don't tease her," said Miss Manners. "I see we must change the subject."

Accordingly, Willie Green was dismissed, and William Jones introduced. Every one, except Miss Manners, had something to say against him—some frightful story to relate in which he had acted a principal part. One told how, on one evening—darker than all other evenings—he had been seen lounging in the neighbourhood of such and such a farm; and how, next morning, one of the farmer's children

died. Another related how he had been heard to rave to himself when he thought no one was near; and many were the extraordinary casualties in which he was declared to have been concerned.

"Pshaw! idle tales," said Miss Manners, who had sat for some time silent. "I have seen the man, and do not think him one-half so bad as he is represented. Never yet have I met any one who had seen him do a wrong action; and yet every one will swell the cry against him. O world! world!"

The young ladies were somewhat surprised at the serious tone in which Miss Manners spoke, but laughed it off, without attempting to argue the matter. How little did they know—how little did Miss Manners know—that, at that very time, the man they spoke of was wandering in the darkness, not far off, with his eyes fixed on the lighted window of the room in which they sat! And, O, what feelings would have filled the breast of poor Jones, if he had known that the light on which he gazed so intently was rendered still brighter by those eyes which he loved best in the world being kindled in his defence.

However, the conversation soon took a lighter turn; and was only interrupted, at length, by the appearance of Willie Green, who was ushered in "by accident," and seemed very desirous to impress upon all present that he had no particular errand. Sly looks were interchanged, which no one, of course, saw; and Willie was speedily inducted as one of the party. Supper followed, at which Mr. Manners was present; and, when the hour of departure came, Miss Manners threw on her bonnet, to trot them, as she expressed it, to the garden gate.

On going down the walk, Mr. Green, who was the pink of politeness, offered Miss Manners his arm; but the latter knew she would not offend him by refusing. One by one, he applied to the other girls; till, as a last resource, he

made an appeal to Emily, who, after some feeble show of following their example, relented; and, while Miss Manners and the rest proceeded onwards, Green and Emily lagged gradually behind. Miss Manners escorted the party a considerable distance on their way, and then bade them good night. Mr. Green offered to accompany her back; but she broke off, saying she was not afraid. The night was rather dark; but, in truth, it was not late; and she tripped on her way homewards without fear of molestation.

As she approached the garden, however, she saw the figure of a man walking on before her, with that slow and apparently lounging step which indicates the absence of any pressing or definite object. It was Jones. Her heart failed her for a moment; but, instantly recovering herself, she proceeded on her way, and passed him. It was dark. There was no one else near. A rush of frightful thoughts came upon her mind; her step faltered; and she felt as if about to faint.

This was a moment, with Jones, of intense—of overwhelming emotion. He had heard her light step behind him, but knew not that it was hers. No sooner, however, had her graceful form caught his eye, than a strange wildness of thought and feeling seized him, approaching almost to delirium. She was alone. He had long wished for such an opportunity to declare his passion; and yet, now that it had arrived, he trembled to embrace it. To allow it to pass was, in all probability, to entail upon himself many more weeks or months of racking anxiety, uncertainty, and suspense; and yet to embrace it was, perhaps, to set the last seal to his despair. On such a subject he could have debated for weeks; but now, the least hesitation, and the opportunity was lost.

While these contending thoughts distracted his mind, Miss Manners started, and almost paused, as if seized with a sudden panic. This fixed his resolution.

"Dear lady!" he said, in a bland and tremulous voice, "you seem frightened. I trust it is not of me you are afraid. Believe me, you are near one who would protect, not harm you."

"Who are you?" she inquired, faintly.

"Who am I?" he replied. "In truth, I can hardly tell you who I am. I am one, madam, lost both to himself and the world—an outcast—a wanderer in solitary places—a madman—a dreamer! O, sweet lady!—but I am wrong to speak thus."

"I know you now," she said, gaining courage; "your name is Jones, is it not?"

"Ay, madam," he answered, "that is my unfortunate name; but, if the world knew all—or if you knew all, I would not care for the world."

"Tell me," she said, but with some hesitation, as if in doubt whether it was proper to stay.

"I will, if you'll forgive me," he said; "but my story is, perhaps, long. Will you walk on?"

Miss Manners proceeded slowly along, with Jones at her side.

"I have now," resumed the latter, "resided for nearly six years in this village. In my intercourse with the world I had been unfortunate, and retirement was what I sought. I found it here; and, between the study of books and nature, I felt myself happy, and associated but little with my neighbours. I do not weary you?"

"No," said Miss Manners; "go on."

"At length," he continued, "I began to feel that marriage would be an addition to my happiness; and, accordingly, I cast my eyes round among the fair maidens of the village. They fell upon the unfortunate Jessie Renton. She lived within a few doors of me, and I had often seen and admired her in my walks. I thought I loved her—for, at that time, I had not learned what true love was—

and offered to make her my wife. I dealt candidly and openly with her. In education, I need not say that I knew she was much beneath me; but she seemed warm-hearted and docile, and I thought it would be a loving pastime for me to make her my pupil. I was not ignorant, however, that she had other lovers; and, although she certainly encouraged my addresses, I saw reason to discontinue my suit. About this time, the awful event took place, the particulars of which are already known to you; and, simply because I had been abroad on the evening of the murder, and near the fatal spot, and partly, no doubt, from the circumstance of my attachment, which I had taken no pains to conceal, suspicion fastened upon me. I will not—indeed I cannot—tell you what laceration of feeling—what distraction of mind—I have since suffered. But you—you, O lady! is it wonderful that I should love you?—you who, when all the world was against me, spoke kindly to me?—you——forgive me, but I love—I adore you; day and night you have been my dream—my idol! But I rave; and yet, do not think me quite mad; for I know I am partly so, and madness knows not itself. O lady!—pardon me! but my heart will not let my tongue speak, lest it should wrong it—could my *heart* speak, could"——

"Sir—sir!" interrupted Miss Manners; "this is frenzy! I beg, sir, you will desist. So sudden—so"——

"Sudden!" exclaimed Jones. "My love may have been sudden; but, for weeks, for months, it has taken possession of me. But, pardon me, madam," he added, in a calmer tone. "Do not mistake me. I know too well that I dare not hope; but an humble offering may be laid upon a lofty shrine. All I ask is your compassion; say only you pity me, and I shall embalm the words in my memory for ever!"

Miss Manners *did* pity him; but begged him, as he valued his own happiness, to banish from his mind all such thoughts as he had expressed.

"Ah, madam," said he, "ask me to part with life, and I may obey you; but, while life remains, I never can cease to love you."

They had now reached the entrance to the garden; and Miss Manners held out her hand, saying—

"Good night."

Jones took the hand. There was no glove on it; and, gently raising it, he pressed it to his lips.

"Madam," he articulated, "good night; farewell. While you are asleep, I shall be thinking of you. On this road, gazing on the window of the room in which I think you are, I shall enjoy more rest than anywhere else I can go."

He was about to add something more; but his utterance became choked; and, again pressing her hand to his lips, while a tear fell on it, he turned abruptly away. Miss Manners said not a word—her heart was too full—but closed the gate behind her and disappeared. Jones listened. He heard her step as she went up the gravel walk, and he heard nothing more. The night was, by this time, fearfully dark, and everything around him was silent. He walked on a short distance, returned, and again walked on. His mind was whirling and confused. He tried to recollect every word which Miss Manners had said, and by this means to get at the real state of her feelings; but he was too much agitated for reflection. On gaining his lodging, he felt faint, and put himself immediately to bed. All night long he tossed about in sleepless excitement; and, in the morning, fell into a feverish doze, broken by unintelligible dreams. When he awoke, he rose up, and felt so giddy as to be unable to stand, and again went to bed. During the day, he felt shivering and unwell; and, the next day, the same symptoms continued, and with increased violence. Another day arrived—another, and another—and all consciousness left him. Several weeks elapsed, and found him still bedridden, but convalescent; and it

was nearly three months before he was enabled to venture out, and then only when the sun was warm.

"You have been long out, Marion," said Mr. Manners to his daughter, as she returned from her accidental interview with Jones. "I was afraid some accident had befallen you."

"No," said Miss Manners, whose eyes were slightly inflamed; for, somehow or other, she had wept before entering the house: "no accident."

"Child," said her father, "what has happened—you look ill!"

Miss Manners told all—her meeting with Jones, and his passionate declaration; but, notwithstanding that her father conjured her not to think of him, she thought of him all night long.

The news of Jones' illness spread rapidly through the village; but, as might be expected, excited little sympathy. With the exception of Mr. Manners and the surgeon of the village, no one looked near his abode; and many were the remarks made by the gossips, that few tears would be shed for him, and that he might bless heaven he was allowed to die in bed. From the manse, however, he received much attention. Anxious inquiries concerning the state of his health were made almost daily, accompanied, occasionally, with presents of wine and jellies. This afforded Jones delightful materials for reflection; and, while his health continued to improve, he occupied his mind with dreams of the future, which his better judgment told him were too bright ever to be realised.

It was on a mild spring morning that the poor invalid sallied forth, for the first time, since his illness. He was still rather pale and feeble; but the air was warm for the season, and he felt happy on being released from his confinement. His appearance, as he walked through the village, brought the people to their doors as before; and the

old remarks about "the man that was tried for murder," were made from mouth to mouth. Nevertheless, he was allowed to pass unmolested, and was soon clear of the houses. The effect of natural scenery, and more particularly, perhaps, of the weather, on the animal spirits, has often been remarked, and the pleasing train of thought which now passed through the mind of our hero, might partly have arisen from this cause. The sun was unshaded, and the road warm and dry. On either side, the leaves were budding from the hedges, and the cheerful warbling of birds infused a delicious and summer-like feeling into his heart. He had gone out without any precise object, and merely to enjoy a walk in the fresh air—so delightful after long confinement to a sick chamber; but his steps had led him almost involuntarily in the direction of the manse. On reaching the gate, he stopped, loitered on for a few yards, and again stopped. He then turned back and hesitated, and at last made bold to enter. As he wound his way slowly up the walk, which was neatly laid off on either side with flowers and shrubbery, he felt more collected than, under the circumstances, he could have imagined possible; and, in a few moments, he was seated in the neat drawing-room of the manse, pouring out his gratitude to Miss Manners for the kindness and attention he had experienced during his illness.

While the two sat conversing together, Mr. Manners entered. He congratulated Jones on his recovery; but the latter did not fail to observe that his manner towards him was less frank than formerly. The truth is, that the old man was a good deal alarmed for his daughter, whom he had warned to discourage his addresses; and, although desirous to treat him with kindness, endeavoured to avoid everything which might seem an approval of his suit. Jones had the good sense not to prolong his visit; and, after cordially repeating his thanks for the

various acts of kindness he had experienced, rose up and took his leave.

To her poor lover, Miss Manners had never appeared so lovely as on this occasion. He left the house with the intention of never beholding her more; but scarcely had he quitted her presence, than he felt that to remain long away were impossible. Her beauty; her goodness; her kind words; her kinder looks; all—all rushed to his mind; and his feelings, which had been somewhat calmed by his illness, acquired even more than their wonted fire. Day after day, as he continued to gather strength, he revisited all his old haunts, and felt as if he had just returned from a sojourn in a distant land. Everything was new and fresh; but, with every scene, old feelings were associated. To him Miss Manners was still the presiding genius of the place, from whom it derived all its beauty, and to whom the worship of his heart was involuntarily offered.

Meanwhile, Miss Manners had received strict injunctions from her father not to receive his visits except when he himself was at home. To this course he had been urged, not so much by his own feelings towards him, as by the advice of his friends. Indeed, Jones was rather a favourite with him. He would willingly have done much to serve him; and yet, when the happiness of his daughter was at stake, he often reflected on the awful consequences which might ensue, if he were really the guilty wretch whom so many suspected he was.

About this time a circumstance occurred, which put an end to his doubts.

Among those who mourned the unhappy fate of the poor village maiden, the grief of her lover, George Merrideth, had been observed to be the wildest. For some days, he had wandered about like one demented; and all who witnessed, respected and commiserated his anguish.

Latterly, however, he had disappeared entirely from the public view; and it was hinted by some, that his mind had been seriously affected by the occurrence. One morning, Mr. Manners was suddenly sent for to attend at his death-bed. When he entered, the patient had fallen into a kind of dozing sleep; and he was motioned to a seat near the bed. The light was almost entirely excluded from the chamber; and the only other person present was the mother of the dying lad, who was a widow. She was wasted with grief and watching, and seemed just such a figure as a painter would have chosen to heighten the melancholy of such a scene. As she came round and whispered some scarcely articulate words into the clergyman's ear, her son murmured in his sleep, became restless, and woke as in terror. Mr. Manners spoke to him in soothing words, and referred to a state of happiness hereafter.

"Aha!" cried he, "can I enter heaven with my hand bloody? Her spirit is sainted. I could not go near it. Oh no—no—never—never."

"Of what is it he speaks?" inquired Mr. Manners.

"Oh, sir!" answered his mother, "his thoughts are wandering. I canna think he killed the lassie he loved."

"Ay, mother," said the youth, with an effort, "this hand did it. O fool!—cut it off—off with it—it is not my hand—my hand never would have done it. Oh—oh—mother—Jessie."

Mr. Manners was dumb with amazement. It was but too evident from whence the agony of the youth flowed, and he sat regarding him with looks of awe and terror.

"It grows dark," continued the patient; "but, softly. You know I loved you when you were a child; but now you love another!—ay, that's it—you will not be mine! It grows still darker!—ha, ha, ha!—fly—fly!—it is done! O God! if I could draw back!"

The dying man waxed wilder in his ravings. After a time, however, he became comparatively calm; and, on Mr. Manners addressing him, recognised his voice.

"Ah, that voice!" he said. "I have often heard it. I have not attended to its counsel; but if it could console—oh, no, I cannot be consoled. Your hand, sir!—forgive—forgive."

"Do not ask forgiveness of me," said Mr. Manners. "May God in his mercy pardon you!"

The wretched youth muttered a kind of incoherent prayer, while his mother dropped on her knees by the bed-side. All afterwards was wildness and despair, only relieved by intervals of exhaustion. Mr. Manners continued to administer such consolation as the circumstances of the case admitted of, and did not leave the house till the voice of the guilty man had become hushed in death, and nothing broke the silence but the moanings of the afflicted mother.

Several days had now passed since Jones visited the manse; and he could hold out no longer. On the very day on which Mr. Manners was engaged in the melancholy duty we have described, the unhappy lover bent his steps thither, with an anxious and fluttering heart. As he walked up the garden, he observed Miss Manners watering a small bed, in which she had planted some favourite flowers. The young lady was a good deal embarrassed on beholding him. Her father's injunctions against receiving his visits had made a deep impression on her mind, and she had directed the servant, the next time he called, to say that she could not be seen. Now, however, there was no escape. Jones walked towards her with a smile of mingled fear and admiration; and, if not with cordiality, she received him at least with politeness. Their conversation, as they strolled through the garden, was at first embarrassed, but became more free by degrees, and assumed

at length an almost confidential tone. To a person of a romantic disposition, Jones' conversation was in a high degree fascinating; and his companion in this delightful walk did not conceal the pleasure with which she listened to it. His candour and unreserve she admired; his misfortunes she commiserated; and, with much that he said she could not fail to be both interested and flattered. Nevertheless, she avoided any word by which she thought she might give encouragement to his hopes; while he, on the other hand, although freely expressing his passion, was careful to avoid a syllable which might lead her to believe that, in his present disgrace and poverty, he presumed to the honour of her hand. After wandering about for some time, their souls melting into each other, Miss Manners could not resist inviting him into the house to rest. Scarcely, however, had they seated themselves in the parlour, when Mr. Manners appeared. He entered with rather a hasty step, and his manner was a good deal agitated. On perceiving Jones, he bowed to him, then turning to his daughter—

"My child!" he said.

"What is it?" inquired Miss Manners, in a tone of alarm.

"Have you," he continued, "forgotten my injunctions?"

Miss Manners cast her eyes on the ground, and seemed displeased at being taken to task before a stranger.

Jones, observing her embarrassment, said—

"Sir, I shall be sorry if my presence here should occasion you any uneasiness. Believe me, I am the last person in the world to intrude where I am not welcome. It will, no doubt, cost me a pang, sir; but if it be your wish that I should not see your daughter more, I shall try to tear my heart from her—I shall go and hide myself in obscurity, and endeavour to forget all I have most loved in this world!"

Mr. Manners raised his hand, as if commanding silence, and gazed stedfastly on his daughter. The latter looked up to him with tears in her eyes, and exclaimed—

"I think Mr. Jones is innocent!"

"He *is* innocent," said the old man, emphatically. "Come to my arms, both!"

Both moved forward and took the hand he offered, but with amazement depicted on their countenances.

"Oh, my children!" he said, "I have witnessed such a scene!"

The old man sat down on the sofa, and, for a few moments, covered his eyes with his hands.

"I have been," he, at length, proceeded, "by the dying bed of the poor village maiden's murderer—I have heard the fearful confession from his own lips. O God! may I never behold such another deathbed!"

Jones dropped on his knee, and Miss Manners clasped her hands as in mute prayer.

"Thank God!" at length exclaimed the latter; "the innocent will no longer suffer for the guilty!"

"No!" said the old man. "Mr. Jones, you have been deeply wronged."

"Ay," said Jones; "but not by you. From you only have I received kindness—kindness often better deserved, but never more needed—often, perhaps, bestowed, but never received with deeper gratitude. While every door was barred against me, yours was open—while every heart"——

His utterance became choked, and he was altogether unable to proceed. Mr. Manners shook him warmly by the hand; and, with many expressions of thankfulness, Jones withdrew, leaving Miss Manners in tears.

On returning homewards, it was obvious that the news of Merrideth's death, together with its fearful revelations, had spread like wildfire through the village. How dif-

ferent was Jones' reception!—nods, recognitions, congratulations, cheers, wherever he passed! Of these, however, he thought not: he thought only of the girl he had left behind him weeping. That very night he again repaired to the manse. He went often; and every succeeding time seemed to be made more welcome.

A pleasant—a delightful change had now taken place in his feelings. The consciousness of having outlived the slander which had so long sullied his name, filled his bosom with a sensation of honest pride, and inspired him with a degree of ease and confidence which he had not previously experienced. Miss Manners was scarcely less gratified by the mystery having been at length cleared up, and the public mind disabused. From her first interview with Jones, she had entertained a strong impression of his innocence; and the fact of her good opinion of him being confirmed, she regarded with feelings almost of triumph. Accordingly, their meetings were mutually delightful. If, at any time, the latter doubted the propriety of encouraging his visits, the reflection that she had done right, in the first instance, in following the dictates of her heart, caused her to continue in the same course. The truth is, she pitied Jones; and pity, it is well known, is akin to a still tenderer emotion.

Two or three weeks after the scene we have described, there was a small evening party at the manse. It was given in honour of Mr. and Mrs. Green, who had just been a few days married. The young couple were ushered into the drawing-room in gay attire, and with their faces wreathed into still gayer smiles; and, in the fair bride, Jones, who was, of course, present, recognized the lady who had, on one occasion, betrayed so much alarm on his doing her a trifling act of kindness. The affair, in the absence of more important topic of conversation, was talked and laughed over; and the bride acknowledged

herself to have been a very silly girl. All the company were soon in high spirits, and the merriment was kept up till it was near midnight. On separating, the company could not help expressing their admiration of the serenity of the night. It was a clear, lovely moonlight; and the exquisite stillness and beauty of the scene caused some of the younger individuals of the party to regret that they had spent so much time within doors. When they reached the gate, Miss Manners, who had accompanied them through the garden, bade them "good night." "Good night," said they, and parted; but Jones, who was the last to shake hands with her, could not part. He lingered, pressed her hand, wished her "good night," and still lingered.

"I must escort you a little way back," he at length said; and, accordingly, the two strolled up the garden, hand in hand—she speaking of the lateness of the hour, and he of the loveliness of the moon and stars, until night, moon, and stars, were all forgotten.

After a few moments' silence, Jones suddenly paused, and, pressing her hand in both of his, said—

"Marion, I would we might never part. I never leave you without pain."

"I know not why it should be so," she said; "but you must just come back the oftener."

"Ay," said he; "but even to be absent from you a little while, is torture."

"I fear," she said, "you are but a poor philosopher."

"Ah," he replied, "philosophy can do many things, but it cannot cure the heartache. O Marion! I love to call you by that name! It is in your power to end all my anxieties: a word—a word will do it! How say you? May I hope? Nay, I do hope; but, may I call you by that name?"

"What name?" interrupted Miss Manners, tremulously.

"That name, dear heart, which is the tenderest man can bestow on woman?"

Her reply was inaudible. Jones, however, kissed her lips, and she forbade him not. On parting, he again kissed her, and returned to his lodgings with feelings of unmixed ecstacy.

A few weeks passed—they were weeks of delicious expectancy, of unrestrained intercourse, of active preparation; and the event which was to crown their happiness was duly solemnized. It was a day of great rejoicing in the village; and, as they dashed off on their marriage jaunt, they were honoured with the blessings and cheers of a large crowd of people who had assembled to wish them joy. On returning, a few days afterwards, similar demonstrations of respect awaited them; and they continued to live in the neighbourhood, greatly esteemed and beloved by all who knew them—esteemed for their many virtues, and beloved for their simple and unostentatious manners.

One little incident, which happened many years afterwards, is perhaps worth relating. An old man, who had been long unable to work, and to whom Jones had shown much kindness, grasped him one day by the hand, and said—

"Sir, I once struck you on the head with a stone; do you forgive me?"

"I do," was the reply; "but you must not do so again."

THE SERGEANT'S TALES.

THE PALANTINES.*

Of all the countless numbers that take their pleasure walks upon the Calton Hill of Edinburgh, none that do not remember it an isolated spot, of awkward access, can have any recollection of Sergeant Square's tall and gaunt figure, his cue, cocked hat, gaiters, and military appearance, as he took his daily promenade around the airy and delightful walks, or sat upon its highest point, where Nelson's Monument now stands, in stately solitude, as if he had been the genius of the hill, resting his square and bony chin on the top of his gold-headed cane, with his immense hands serving as a cushion between. Thus would he sit for hours, gazing on the busy scene beneath, as if he knew what occupied the bustling crowds, and directed their labours according to the impulse of his will. We had passed and repassed each other in our walks for weeks, before any approach to recognition took place between us. I was the first to make an advance, by giving him a slight bow, as we passed; this he returned, and an acquaintance soon ripened into intimacy. Under his stiff and formal air, I found one of the most kind and communicative hearts I ever communed with. It is long since I laid his head in the grave; and I never visit the hill, but memory con-

* Palantine—a name given by the Americans and seamen, to kidnapped individuals, or those who went out voluntarily to be indented, for a time agreed upon, with any person in America willing to pay the sum of money required by the captain for their passage out. The famous Williamson, who first invented the penny-post and directories, obtained damages from the magistrates of Aberdeen for suppressing his narrative, in which he exposed them for this traffic.—Ed.

jures up his remarkable figure, as vividly as if we stood face to face, till I almost think I may meet him at each turn, while I saunter along, lost in musing on days that are gone. I may meet with new piles of stone and mortar profaning the sacred spot; but, Sergeant Square I shall never meet there again! But to proceed. It was on that day the 42d regiment marched into Edinburgh, after their return from Egypt, that we were enjoying our usual walk. It was a spirit-stirring time, and our talk was of war, and the gallant exploits of our countrymen. His eye flashed; his gold-headed cane rested on his shoulder as if it had been a musket; his walk became a march; he was evidently thinking of the battles he had been in; when, embracing the opportunity, I requested a short account of his adventures. It was some time before he took any notice of my request, so completely was his mind absorbed in his own recollections. We had reached the north-east angle of the hill before he spoke. At length he seated himself on the smooth green turf—I by his side; and, after a pause—

"If you have the patience to listen to me," he said, "I do not care if I do give you some account of what I have seen, suffered, and enjoyed in this strange world."

"It is of small importance," he began, "where a man was born, or who was his father—his own actions must bring him fame or shame. The first sounds that ever attracted my particular attention, were those of the music bells of old St. Giles', and the firing of the guns in Edinburgh Castle. I had reached my twelfth year, when my father, who was a Jacobite, joined the Highland army at Duddingstone, while Prince Charles was in Holyrood House, and I never saw him again. My mother, who was weakly at the time, and our circumstances very poor—for my father was only a day-labourer—took it so much to heart that she survived only a few months, and I was thrown destitute upon my own resources, which, God

knows, were scant enough. I was tall and stout for my age, and roughed it out, ragged, hungry, and cold, about the city, for three years and some months—running messages, or doing any little thing I could get to do for a piece of bread or a mouthful of victuals; and choosing the warmest stair, or any other convenient place, for a bedroom. Rough as this training was, I was far from being unhappy; for I had my enjoyments, humble as they were—as yet innocent, and as keenly relished as if they had been those of luxury. These few years of hardships were soon to be of eminent service to me—perhaps the means of saving my life.

It was the spring of the year. The winter had been very severe, and I was rejoicing in the thought of summer, which, for the poor, has fewer wants and less of suffering. Loitering, as usual, upon the High Street, hungry enough, and looking for some little job to earn a breakfast, I was accosted by a rough-looking man, rather genteelly dressed, who inquired if I would carry a parcel for him to Leith, and he would give me a sixpence. My heart bounding with joy at the rich reward, I said I would. Whereupon he inquired if my parents would not be angry at my going, or my master, if I had one. I told him I had neither parent nor master, not even a friend in the world to find fault with me how I spent my time. A grim smile of satisfaction came over his countenance; he put the offered sixpence again into his pocket, and gave me a small paper parcel, with the direction where I was to carry it; adding, as I stood waiting for my reward—'Run quick, like a good boy. Tell them to give you some breakfast, and wait until I come and give you the sixpence.' Away I ran, like a greyhound from the slip, to get a breakfast and earn my sixpence. Swift as was my flight, never did the Canongate or the Easter Road—the only one to Leith from Edinburgh at this time—appear so long to me. When I

arrived at the house to which I had been directed, in one of the dark alleys near the shore, I was ushered into a small, darkened room. A stout, thick-set man, in a seaman's dress, heard my message, received my parcel, without once opening his lips, and locked the door.

Hungry, disappointed, and alarmed at this unlooked-for reception, I stood for some time lost in amazement. At length I looked around; there was no furniture in the room, not even so much as a seat of any kind. My fears became excessive. I screamed to be set at liberty, and beat upon the door with my hands and feet, until I sank upon the floor from fatigue, and burst out into a fit of weeping. No answer was made, nor any notice taken of my efforts. I looked through my tears at the window; but it was high, small, and strongly secured with iron stanchels. I had lain thus on the floor for an hour or two, when I heard the key turn in the lock. I sprung to my feet as the door opened; and the same person entered, bearing a pewter tankard of beer, some bread, and salt beef. A thick stick under his arm caught my eye, and excited new terrors. He set the victuals upon the floor, and then, brandishing the bludgeon over my head, threatened to beat my brains out if I made such a noise again—giving, in pure cruelty and wantonness of power, a few blows across the shoulders, to teach me, as he said, what I might expect if I did not attend to his orders. Pointing to the food, he surlily ordered me to eat, and immediately again locked the door. Hungry as I had been a short time before, my heart was too full for me to eat; and the blows I had received pained me very much. I sat down and wept more bitterly than I had done; but the hunger of a boy is keener than his grief—so I at length made a hearty meal, moistened by my tears, and wept myself asleep.

How long I had lain thus I had no means of ascertain-

ing. I was roused by the voice of mirth and singing in another apartment. All was dark; so much so, I could not even distinguish the small grated window from the dead walls. I listened for some time in surprise, and would fain have persuaded myself I had been in an unpleasant dream; but my shoulders were still sore, and the small basket and tankard, I felt, were still at my side. For some time I revolved in my mind what step to take—whether to remain quiet, or knock upon the door, and implore my liberty—at least to be made acquainted with the cause of my being detained. At length my suspense became so unbearable that I resolved to brave every danger, and began to knock at the door, for which I had groped, tapping gently at first, and gradually knocking louder and louder. The voice of my jailor, evidently in extreme anger, again sounded fearfully through the key-hole—'Be quiet, or I will come in and beat your noisy body to a mummy.' I shrunk from the door, and leaned upon the wall, as far from him as the small dimensions of the room would admit, trembling, in fearful expectation of his entrance. While I stood thus, a prey to the keenest anguish, the mirth and jollity for a time increased, and at length grew fainter and fainter, until it ceased. All was still for a little; then I heard the noise of footsteps approaching the door of my prison-room, and a sound as if something was in the act of being dragged along the passage. The key was placed in the door, and it opened. My heart beat as if it would have burst my bosom, when I saw the ruffian who had locked me up, and another like himself, dragging what appeared to me to be the dead body of a man. I uttered a suppressed scream, and must have fallen to the ground, had I not been pent up in the corner. My eyes were as if they would have started from their sockets, and I could not withdraw them from the horrid sight. One of the men held a lanthorn in his left hand, which threw a

feeble light upon the group; while, with his right hand, he grasped the left arm of the body; and, his companion exerting all his strength, they dragged it to the side of the room, and dropped it upon the floor. A stifled groan issued from it, which thrilled through my ears like an order for my execution; and I would have darted from the spot, wild with despair, although I saw the eyes of both watching me, as they deposited the body, with a malignant grin of satisfaction; but my limbs refused to obey my will, and I stood the image of despair. The men spoke not a word, but, retiring, locked the door upon me, and left me with a thing my nature revolted from. Scarce were they gone when similar sounds fell upon my ear, and they again entered with a second victim. This was more than I could endure: a wild energy came over me; I sank upon my knees, and implored them not to murder me, or leave me alone with the bodies, for mercy's sake! I sank upon the floor, and grasped their legs in the fervency of my supplications. With a fiendish laugh, they spurned me from them; and, as they locked the door, growled—

'What does the fool mean?—beware, the cudgel!'

As the sound of the closing and locking of the door died away, I was roused from my stupor of fear to an agony of terror, that drove me almost to madness. A movement in one of the bodies, accompanied by deep guttural sounds, indicated that the objects of my terror were coming to life again, or were not yet quite dead. This produced new terrors, and I dashed myself upon the door, uttering the most piercing cries. The ruffians again entered, and beat me without mercy; but I was now beyond the fear of personal suffering; and I really believe, so intense was my feeling of fear and horror, that I would have leaped into a furnace to avoid or free myself from my situation. Their threats and blows were vain. I reiterated my cries more intensely; for I saw both the bodies become apparently

animated, and turn their dull, stupid gaze on me, as I struggled to wrench myself from the grasp of the ruffians. Our struggle was short; for one of them set down the lanthorn, forced down my arms behind me, and held me fast, while the other dropped the cudgel with which he had been beating me, and, taking a piece of rope-yarn from his jacket pocket, bound my wrists behind my back; he then deliberately took the large key out of the lock of the door, placed it in my mouth, across between my teeth, tied it firm behind my head, and so effectively gagged me, that I could not utter a sound. How I retained my reason at this fearful period I know not, for I expected death every moment; and there was a misty vagueness about my fate that had even greater terror than death itself. As soon as I was thus silenced, they stood grinning at my agony for a minute before either spoke. At length—

'This is a troublesome customer enough, for noise part, said the first ruffian to the other; 'but he will now be quiet enough, I think. I wish the boat were come, or we shall have plenty on our hands soon, when these two have slept it off. It is full tide now, and they were to have been here an hour ere flow. What can detain the lubbers, think you?'

'Can't say,' replied the other; 'perhaps something is in their way. There they are.'

At this moment a low whistle sounded faintly into the room, as if coming from under the window. One of the men answered by a similar whistle, and both left the room; and in a few minutes four sailors entered, and, taking up one of the objects of my dread, carried it out. One of the ruffians then assisted me to rise, and, holding me by the collar, dragged me out of the house after them, down to the Ferry-boat Stairs at the quay, more dead than alive. The four seamen had placed their burden in a boat that lay there. I was placed beside it. It lay inanimate; and I,

seated on one of the thwarts, was guarded by two seamen, who kept watch, while the four were away for the other victim. At length they came, deposited their burden beside the other, pushed off from the pier, and rowed out of the harbour's mouth. As they pulled along, I felt my spirits revive, the fear of immediate death passed from my mind; and, besides, I was in company with living beings like myself, however cruel they might be. Before we reached the beacon, the ruffian who had first locked me up, and who was now in the boat with us, loosened the key from my mouth, and undid the cord from my hands, which had begun to swell, from the tight manner in which they were tied. This act almost relieved me of my fears; still all was silence in the boat, not a word had as yet been spoken by any one; but afterwards, as we gained distance from the shore, they began to converse.

'So the Betsy sails to-morrow, without fail,' said the first ruffian.

'She does,' was the answer of the seaman.

'Why has her stay been so short this trip?' again asked the man. 'We will make but a poor job of it. We have only nabbed five.'

'Why, I think you have done pretty well,' answered the sailor; 'twenty-five pounds for two days' work is good pay. Old Satan, you are never content.'

'None of your slack, mate,' rejoined the other; 'I won't stand it. Two days more would have made it fifty or better; and no man, more than I, would be content with one half of what he might and ought to have.'

'I believe we are full, old Grumbler,' said the tar; 'others are more active than you; but here, we are just alongside of the Betsy. Ship, ahoy! Throw us a rope! Are you all asleep?'

In a few minutes, a rope was thrown; it was made fast by the fore thwarts, when the ruffians and mate went on

board, and remained for some time. At length the mate returned, and, holding the end of the rope from the vessel, ordered me to ascend, which I did with difficulty. My two companions were then hoisted on board, being fastened to a rope, and dragged up by the crew of the vessel. As soon as they were on deck, the ruffians descended into a boat without speaking a word, and put off for the harbour.

When it was gone, I was conducted to the hold of the vessel; and the two companions of my adventure were carried, and placed beside me. My terror of them had now entirely fled; for, from their contortions and half-muttered expressions, I had perceived they were not dead, but in a beastly state of intoxication. Even to be from under the same roof with the cause of my sufferings was to me a change much for the better. With a mind comparatively at ease, I fell asleep upon the hard deck, where I had at first taken my station, and remained in happy unconsciousness until I was awoke after sunrise, in consequence of the bustle and noise around me. For a few minutes I revolved the events of the preceding day and night in my mind, and shuddered as the recollection dawned upon me. Raising myself upon my elbow, I gazed around as well as the obscurity would permit (for the main hatch was closed), and saw the two young men who had caused me so much alarm, lying close beside me, in a profound sleep, and breathing very heavily. I attempted to rise; but felt so sick and giddy that I could not keep my feet, from the motion of the vessel. I longed for the presence of some of the crew; but none of them came near us. The two lads at length awoke from their sleep, bewildered and sick almost to death; they gazed around them with a vacant stare, as if they had just passed into a new state of existence. They spoke not a word; their minds were occupied in examining all around them, and, as I thought, ascer-

taining their own identity. Young as I was, had I been at ease, I could have enjoyed the extraordinary scene before me; but, alas! I was a partaker of all the feelings that were passing in their minds. At length they broke silence—

'Willie, Willie, what's come owre us now?' cried Peter.

'Indeed I do not know, Peter,' replied he; 'but I fear it is no good.'

'What good can be expected from such company as we were in last night?' continued the first, 'and such drinking as we had. O Willie, had you come away when I wanted —but I am as bad as you, or I would have left you when I threatened.'

'There is no use to reflect upon what is done, when it cannot be undone,' said his friend. 'I fear the deceitful scoundrels drugged our liquor; for I have no recollection of anything that occurred after your proposing to leave them.'

Then, addressing me, he asked if I knew where they were, or in what ship. I answered that I did not, further than that, from what I had seen and heard, I thought we were on board of a vessel they called the Betsy; and then gave them an account of all I had witnessed the evening before. The younger of the two began to weep like a child; while the other, whose rage knew no bounds, swore fearfully at the two ruffians who had betrayed them into their present situation. When he became more calm, I requested him to explain himself; and learned from him his own history and that of his companion. They were schoolfellows, cousins, and fellow-apprentices; had served their time as joiners; and then left their native village, to pursue their calling in the capital, with some views, though not matured, of emigrating to America. Having been unsuccessful in obtaining work in the city, they had come down to Leith to make inquiries about a passage to

America; and were so unfortunate as to fall into the hands of one of the notorious plantation-crimps, who, pretending to be intimate with the captain of a trading vessel about to sail, enticed them to his den, that they might obtain all the information they required. They were plied with liquor; robbed of all the money they had; and placed in the situation in which I now saw them. From the inquiries they had made in Leith, and our mutual explanations, it was too evident to us all three that we had been kidnapped and sold to a palantine vessel, to be carried out to Virginia, and there sold as slaves, to the highest bidder. The young men were inconsolable; as for me, I cared little about it, now that I was assured there was no immediate personal violence to be feared: hard fare and hard living were my lot—I knew no other. While others, bred to better things, were in misery, I was comparatively in happiness. Such is the influence of habit. To have my provisions regularly served, with nothing to do but lie upon the floor of the hold, or walk about in its narrow limits, was to me sufficient recompense for an evil, which to others would have appeared irremediable.

The next tide after we were put on board, the Betsy left Leith Roads, and sailed for Aberdeen, on her progress north. Our number was there augmented to eighteen—the recruits being all boys about my own age, who, not being kidnapped, but trepanned with false promises, came on board in great spirits, and full of hope. I could notice the various operations going forward, in consequence of my cheerful and contented manner having obtained for me permission to come on deck and range over the vessel. My slight sickness went off as soon as we were under way; and, pleased with my new mode of life, I began to make myself as useful to the crew as I could; but the two lads were not so fortunate; for they were continually abusing the captain, or importuning him to put them on shore.

In the forenoon of the day before we sailed from Aberdeen, a boat, containing a quantity of luggage, came alongside, and a genteelly-dressed couple came on board, and were ushered into the cabin. The female appeared very dejected; and, hanging upon the male with anxious fondness, expressed through her silent tears, bent her gaze, alternately looking towards the shore with an expression of regret, and then in his face with a languid smile. He was as well-made and good-looking a man as I have ever seen in all my wanderings; but there was a marble-like rigidity in his features, only enlivened by a peculiar cast of his piercing black eyes, that created a peculiar feeling of uneasiness in me as I looked at him. He left the vessel; but when I know not; for we sailed before sunset; and I never again saw the female he left until we had passed Cape Wrath, some few days after. As for myself, I was quite happy, and felt myself more at home than I had done since my mother's death. The ship was a home to me. I had my allowance with the other palantines; slept in the hold with them at night; and enjoyed, along with many of them, the pleasure of building castles in the air—anticipations of the wealth and comforts we were to enjoy in the land of promise. It was, indeed, by delusive accounts of America, that most of them had been induced to embark.

We were now careering over the blue waves of the vast Atlantic, as if we were far above the earth. Nothing was there for the weary eye to rest upon but a deary expanse of ocean and sky. All was still as death, save the hissing at the bows of the vessel, as she parted the unfathomable deep. The crew loitered upon the decks listlessly; and we, as palantines, huddled together around the mainmast, were whiling away the time in songs, or talking of the homes we had left behind, and future hopes in a foreign land. We were suddenly interrupted by the female I have already mentioned, who came rushing up the companion,

from the cabin, and crouched amongst us like a frightened hare. I could not have believed that so short a period of time could have wrought so great a change upon a human being. She was thin, pale; her eyes red, and sunk in her head; her hair dishevelled; and her whole appearance exhibiting the extreme of neglect. We all looked upon her in astonishment; for, indeed, we were not aware that there was a female on board. Her sobs and distracted looks moved our young hearts almost to tears. She spoke nothing; fear had chained up her tongue; her eyes were either bent imploringly upon us, or turned, in aversion and terror, towards the quarter from whence she had come. All on deck was dumb show; the sailors looked on, apparently as much surprised as we were; and, in the midst of the silent scene, the captain came on deck, apparently in great agitation. He was coming towards us, when the female sank on her knees, and, raising her clasped hands, called on God to save her from that bad man; then, looking around to us, implored us, in the most thrilling accents, not to deliver her up to him. We were ourselves slaves; yet, such is the force of a woman's appeal, that we placed ourselves between her and him, while the crew stood apart, and looked silently on. The captain affected to laugh.

'Lady, what are you afraid of, that you have left the cabin?' he said. 'It was all in jest, upon my honour! You are as safe there as in your father's house. Come, madam, I shall have the pleasure to lead you back.'

'Oh, never!' screamed the female. 'Leave me! leave me! if you would not drive me mad, or into this boundless ocean. What on earth have I now to care for? I know I am your slave, by the basest and cruellest means, but worse I shall never be. A favour from your hands would be hateful to me. With these, my fellow-sufferers, I can alone feel myself secure from insult. Your cabin I

shall never enter. Foolish—oh, how foolishly confiding I have been!—but criminal I shall never be. So, leave me, for mercy sake!'

While she spoke, my eyes were fixed upon him. I saw the working of passion deeply depicted on his countenance; pity had no place there. A faint shade of shame passed over him; but disappointment settled into fierce rage. Stamping upon the deck, and in a voice hoarse from emotion—

'It is well, madam,' he cried. 'You have made your choice, and shall abide by it; and those who, by their looks, indicate their resolution to abet your folly, shall not fare the better for their interference. Mate, call the crew! force the palantines below; and batten them down, as base mutineers.'

Not one of us had as yet spoken one word; the whole was the affair of a few minutes. The mate ordered us below; and we were obeying the order as fast as we could—the distressed female huddling in the midst of us, fearful to be on the deck alone—when William, in his undaunted manner, stepped up to the captain, and began to upbraid him, both for his conduct in having kidnapped us, and for his present conduct towards an unprotected female. He even threatened him with exposure as soon as we reached the shores of America. Peter, his friend, in vain urged him to refrain from irritating the captain; but the hot-headed youth heeded not the advice, and stood by his point, till the captain, who uttered not one word, bit his lip, and, hurrying to his cabin, returned with a cocked pistol in each hand. The mate, who was a good-hearted kind of lad, was, at the moment, persuading William to go below quietly; but his blood was up; and, even at sight of the pistols, he quailed not. I looked on with fear, for the captain's stern silence looked ominous. He levelled one of the pistols, and fired: the ball passed close

by his intended victim, and went right through the foresail. The second he was in the act of raising, when William struck his hand down, and it went off, sending the ball through the deck. The furious man now called to the mate and crew to place poor William in irons. The youth stood still resolute, and would have rushed upon the captain and hurled him to the deck, or perhaps overboard (for he was a powerful lad), had not Peter held him back. The irons were now produced from the cabin—William and the captain eyeing each other meanwhile like two tigers; and three of the crew and the mate, set on by the captain, who kept blaspheming in a fearful manner, rushed to secure the young man. Peter at once loosed his hold of William, and stood in his defence; whereupon the captain, starting to give personal aid, uttered a shrill cry of pain, and fell upon the deck, which was stained with his blood. The ball had passed through his foot before it entered the wood. As many of us as the hatchway would admit, witnessed the scene; but none of us had any mind to be partakers in it. William and Peter were secured and put in irons before the vindictive villain would allow himself to be removed from the deck. It was no matter, in his anger, that his foot bled. He even stood, while the deck was streaming, till we were also battened down into the dark hold—the two companions remaining in irons above. As soon as we were all settled below, in which there was not even proper accommodation for us poor palantines, the female retired to one corner; and, seating herself on the bare boards, leaned her head to the side of the vessel, and wept bitterly. We were deeply affected by her situation and distress; but had nothing in our power whereby to alleviate her sorrow, save, indeed, our sympathy; and that we only gave in secret; for her ladylike appearance, in a great measure, overawed us, and made us retire from her. The greater part of us composed ourselves to sleep. Before

morning, it blew a dreadful gale, as we could perceive by the pitching of the vessel and the noise of the rigging, which sounded fearfully in our ears. All of us became very sick. The poor lady I thought would have died; her weakness was extreme; and her suffering apparently beyond any present remeid. Two days and nights we remained in this dreadful situation, without a mouthful of food or a drop of water. Our sufferings increased hourly, and were almost more than we could endure. We shouted for help, or to be liberated from our noisome prison. Our cries were either unheeded or drowned by the noise and tumult of the storm. I and a few more had recovered from the sickness only to feel, in greater horror, our painful situation. The heat of the hold was intense, and aggravated our thirst tenfold. The air even became offensive; our breathing a kind of painful spasm of the windpipe. We crept to the foot of the ladder under the main hatch and, holding by it, sucked in some fresh air. I had been here for some time, and felt my sufferings alleviated; and the poor female's situation in the distant corner, selfish as we had all become, moved us so much to pity, that two of us agreed to relinquish our envied post, to ascertain whether she still survived.

We found her extended upon the hard boards, to all appearance dead; I placed my hand upon her heart, to ascertain if life was extinct. She opened her eyes, and made a motion with her hand as if she wished me to retire. Humanity forbade compliance; and, in the best manner we could, we conveyed her to the foot of the ladder, where she gradually began to recover and breathe more freely. This was now the third day of our confinement. The storm had almost subsided, as we could feel from the vessel lying more steady in the water; and, to our unspeakable joy, the hatch was opened, and a supply of water and biscuit given to us. Next to the water, the pure air of heaven was

most welcome to us. I wet the parched lips of the pale sufferer, then held the beverage to them. She swallowed a few mouthfuls, blessed me for my kindness, then sank into her usual melancholy. We were now told by the mate that we were not to come on deck; but he would leave the hatch open. We obeyed this command, which came from the captain. William and Peter, who had witnessed and endured the whole storm, in irons, lashed at the foot of the mainmast to a ring bolt, were also liberated, and came down amongst us. We learned from them that we had been in great danger, and that the mate and crew had been alarmed for the safety of the vessel. The captain was still unable to leave his cabin; and, from all accounts, he was very bad of the wound. This was so far fortunate; for the mate, who was of a humane disposition, brought some coffee for the female, which William, with great difficulty, prevailed upon her to take. She gradually began to recover; and the more passionate bursts of her grief having subsided, we were anxious to learn how she had been reduced to her present situation, and thought of making a delicate inquiry into her history. At length the frank and generous William put the question to her in the most gentle manner; a burst of tears followed the request.

'Much as it will pain me,' she said, 'I am so indebted to you all for your kindness and humanity, that I cannot refuse your desire. I almost feel it a duty to myself; for appearances are strongly against me. So low as I must appear at present to you all, I was born in affluence, though not of an ancient family. My father was a wealthy merchant, and the best of parents. My sainted mother died before I had reached my tenth year, leaving us both inconsolable for her loss. My father, who could scarce endure to have me out of his sight—for I was an only child—engaged a governess to complete my education. She was

a young woman of engaging manners, and possessed of every accomplishment; yet under these she concealed a selfish disposition and hardness of heart, which neither my father nor myself suspected could have existed in one so young and bland in her speech. To me she was most kind and unremitting in her duties—more, indeed, like a mother than a hireling; and I loved her as if she had stood in that relation to me. This won my father's esteem for her, which, unfortunately, soon ripened into love. One day, I recollect, as I was walking in the garden, accompanied by him, he led me to an arbour, and, placing me beside him, said—

'Eliza, do you love Marian?

I artlessly threw my arms around his neck, and exclaiming—

'Oh, yes, papa; how much I thank you for getting me so good a governess!'

I had pleased him; for he smiled and said—

'My dear Eliza, I mean to bind her to you by a stronger tie. I have watched her maternal care and affection for you, and mean to give her the right to call you daughter.'

I was delighted. The marriage was solemnised, and we lived in harmony and mutual love, so far as I could perceive, for six years. At this period my father fell into a bad state of health, which threatened to terminate fatally. Our attentions to him, unremitting and anxious, were repaid by a gratitude and love which seemed equally divided between his young wife and the child of his first love. Marian showed no jealousy; and my heart was incapable of any feelings but those of affection. Meanwhile, my dear parent, to prepare for the worst, settled his affairs. We were both in the room with him along with the lawyer. He was dissolved in tears, and asked us if we were satisfied with the manner in which he dictated the disposal of his wealth. I could only answer by my sobs. My grief was

excessive. The making of a will, to my young and inexperienced mind, had all the appearance of the last act of a living person. Death soon closed the scene. By the settlement, it was provided that we were to be treated as sisters, only a greater share of power (as if she had been the elder sister) was given to his wife. It ran thus:—If neither married, we were to live together, and the survivor was to enjoy and have the disposal of all. If Marian married, she was, during her life, to enjoy one-half, which was to revert to me or my children at her death. If I married during her life, without her consent I was to be cut off from any part of my father's property, except what she might choose to give me. This was a hard condition. I was to have no claim at law; and, in the event of me or my husband instituting an action, I was to be cut off with a shilling. This fatal clause, which I heard read to me at the time with indifference, has been the cause of all my misfortunes, and since then I have had every reason to believe my confiding father was prompted to insert it, at the suggestion of my artful stepmother. For some time, she had, at every opportunity, been speaking of foolish marriages made by young women, and their fatal consequences, illustrating them by numerous anecdotes and examples, whereby she invidiously prepared him for her selfish purpose, and at last compassed her object without the appearance of a dictation which he would have spurned. I was thus left at the mercy of this designing woman, who, when she put on her widow's robes, put off her hypocrisy towards me, and began to appear in her true colours. Alas! I have every reason to think that her acting had all along been irksome to her. She became harsh and cruel, doing all she could to make the house and her presence disagreeable to me. She became gay, and frequented company, of which I was forced to partake; and when I could scarce refrain from tears at the remembrance of some cutting

speech she had used to me only a few hours before, I was forced to smile to hide my chagrin. Before strangers, there was no change towards me, neither was there anything I could complain of to my acquaintance; for so artfully did she manage to make me miserable, that every fault was imputable to my own apparent bad temper. It was when alone that I experienced her bitter manner. All was wrong I said or did, and her admonitions for my amendment were more cutting than her reproofs and abuse. I had several eligible offers for my hand; all of which she refused, under one pretence or another—covering her designs against me by the mask of an anxiety for my happiness; so that she was looked upon by all who were acquainted with her as the best of stepmothers—the kindest protector of youth. At length, her wishes were accomplished. A nephew of her own, by her invitation, came to reside with us for a short time, upon a visit. As if my good genius warned me of my fate, I disliked him so much at first, that I felt unhappy in his presence; but his assiduities gradually won upon me. I contrasted him with his aunt; love succeeded to aversion; and I was ruined.'

Here a burst of tears for a time choked her utterance. After some time, she resumed—

'I was now, for a time, happy in the delirium of youthful love. His tender attentions had completely won my heart. With a thrill of pleasure, covered by maiden modesty, I heard his first declaration of unalterable love for me. He saw too plainly the power he had over me. His aunt refused, as usual, her consent to our union; and, after upbraiding me for seducing the affections of her nephew, locked me up in my room, while she retained him in the house. Stolen interviews were the natural consequence. He was all indignation at his aunt for her unkindness to me; and, if possible, more tender and respectful than ever. To escape the tyranny I had so long

suffered, I unfortunately agreed to elope with him, and be privately married. I explained to him the situation in which I was placed, by my father's will—he declared he loved me for myself alone. I was now completely in the toils; gave my consent; on the third night left my late father's house in his company, and set off in a postchaise, which was drawn up at a short distance from the gate. Next forenoon, we were lawfully married—his aunt taking no steps to prevent it by following us, but contenting herself by putting on the appearance of grief for my folly and ingratitude to her, for all the care and attention she had bestowed upon my education, and the base return I had made for all her kindness. Can there be a doubt she was the cause of all? Nay—she was the first to make known to me the prior history of my husband—the man whom she had first introduced to me, and to whom she gave every facility to win my unsuspecting heart. She herself now blushed not to say that he was a reprobate, without prinple, addicted to every vice, and one whom his friends had found it out of their power to reclaim. With well-feigned tears of regret, she upbraided herself for having ever allowed him to enter her house—ascribing her motive to humanity, and a desire to reclaim him from his errors; and hinting, when she could, that I had defeated her good intentions, and ruined myself. Alas! how true the latter part has proved to me! I and my husband wrote to her letter after letter, in vain. She refused, in the most insulting manner, to allow me a shilling of my father's fortune. All I obtained was my own personal effects, and a few of the jewels that had belonged to my mother. Poverty came fast upon us, and debts increased. My husband had become unkind, and often absent from me for days—excusing himself by fears for his creditors. In our extremity, he spoke of emigration to America, describing the country in glowing colours, and dwelling on the happy prospects he anticipated

from the assistance of some relations he had there. I offered no objection; for I had now no partiality for one country more than another—where my husband was, there was my heart and home; and, with a severe pang, not for their value, but for the sake of her who now was unconscious of my situation, I parted with the last of my mother's jewels, to defray the expense of our voyage. My own jewels had been long since disposed of, to supply our urgent wants. We left Edinburgh, like guilty creatures, under the cloud of night, for fear of his being arrested, and proceeded to join the vessel at Aberdeen. I can proceed no further, lest my heart should burst. My heartless husband had sold me to the captain, to be disposed of in America—trepanned me north for his wicked purpose. The rest you know.'

Here her tears could no longer be suppressed; nor could we restrain ours; yet no one spoke to interrupt her grief. William alone uttered a few execrations against the aunt and nephew.

The weather continued rough, and the wind contrary, and we suffered much for a few days from the pitching of the vessel. We were still confined to the hold by the captain's orders; yet we had no other cause of complaint, for the mate supplied all our wants in abundance. The captain, who had continued very ill from the wound in his foot, at length fevered, and his life was in danger; at his request, the lady left the hold and waited upon him. He begged forgiveness for the insult he had offered her; we were all allowed the freedom of the vessel; and she continued to nurse and watch over him with all that care and assiduity that belong to women. After a tedious passage of nine weeks, we arrived off Baltimore, in the State of Maryland; the captain, who recovered, being still very lame, though able to come upon deck. As soon as we cast anchor off the mouth of the harbour (for we did not enter),

a message was sent to the town by the captain; and, on the following day, a regular market was held upon our deck, when we were put up to sale, and knocked down by an auctioneer to the highest bidder. William and Peter brought large sums, being expert tradesmen, and their time of service was short, compared with the rest. The others, like myself, were fit only for field work, and our time, to make up the sum of forty pounds, which we averaged, was three years. We all thought the captain would have given the injured lady her liberty, and a present, for her care of him; but avarice was his ruling passion, and stifled gratitude. He had paid her unprincipled husband a large sum for his victim, and was determined to reimburse himself. All the favour he conferred upon her was, that he did not dispose of her with the same regardlessness as to who was the purchaser, but kept her on board several days, while he made inquiries as to an eligible situation. Those who knew him gave him little credit for his endeavours, and did not scruple to say that he was as anxious to drive a good bargain for himself as to find a good master for her. Whatever was his motive, it turned out very fortunate for her, as I heard afterwards; for a rich shipowner of the city, whose wife had died a few months before, satisfied the captain's cupidity, and took her to his house as a governess to his children, three of whom were daughters. Before I left Maryland, I heard that she had learned, through the English papers, which her master regularly got, by one or other of the many vessels that traded to this port, that her unprincipled husband had been condemned and executed for robbing his aunt of a large sum of money, and forging an order upon her banker, not many weeks after we had left Scotland. Many years afterwards, I learned, in Edinburgh, from William, who had returned, after a long stay in Baltimore, with a considerable sum of money, and had commenced builder, that

before he left the city, she had married her master, and was as wealthy and happy as any lady in the province. But what struck me most forcibly was, the just retribution that had taken place in her singular fortunes. Her stepmother was, when he left, actually living an humble dependent upon her bounty, in Baltimore. It appeared that, after she had succeeded in forcing her stepdaughter into the fatal marriage with her nephew, and obtained the object she plotted for—possession of the whole property—she herself fell a victim to a husband nearly as bad—a gambler and adventurer, of a most prepossessing figure and address; the consequence was, that all she possessed was lost by him at play, or squandered in dissipation. Both had been living in London in extreme want, when he was detected in swindling transactions to a considerable amount. Whether guilty or innocent of the fraudulent acts of her husband, there were many suspicious circumstances which she could not explain to the satisfaction of a jury, and both were convicted and banished to the plantations. By good fortune for them, the vessel that brought them out, bound for Norfolk, in Virginia, had suffered much in a storm, put into Baltimore in a leaky state, and there landed the convicts, handing them over to the governor of Maryland. Eliza's husband, who was in the magistracy of the city, got the list of their names when they were transferred from the ship to the prison. Several of them had died on the voyage, from bad fare, confinement, and harsh treatment; mostly all were sickly, more or less; and Marian was very ill. From her manners and appearance, Eliza's husband became interested in her; and, to save her life, had her removed from the hospital in the jail, to his own house. You may form your own conjectures of the astonishment of both when they met. Eliza was the most forgiving and gentle of creatures, as she had shown in her attention to the captain after his bad usage of her; and, at her request, her

husband got from the governor a grant of their services, during the term the law had condemned them to serve. The husband ran from the country a few months after his arrival, and had not been heard of when William came away; but the wife remained under the protection of her she had attempted to ruin.

To return to myself after this long digression, I and other two of the young Aberdeen lads were purchased by a farmer, and removed that afternoon to his home, about twelve miles from Baltimore. A more pitiable figure, as regards dress, never landed on any shore. I had still the same remnant of clothes with which I had left Edinburgh; but now they scarcely held together, and were besmeared with tar; my feet and legs were clean, but shoes or stockings were a luxury I had been long unused to. My long yellow hair hung down my back, but covering I had none for my head. My heart was light and joyous, as was that of my companions. Our three years of bondage, we thought, would soon pass away, and the golden period commence. During our ride over the rough and ill-made road, in a waggon in which our master had brought a load of tobacco to town, our whole conversation was of our future golden prospects; but, alas! we were soon awakened from our pleasant dreams—for, upon our arrival at the farm, which was not until some time after nightfall, we were placed in a dark out-house, and the door barred upon us. Our master was a sour-looking, taciturn man, who had scarcely spoken to us all the way, save to inquire our ages, and what kind of work we could best perform. For some time we stood close by the door, unable to speak from surprise and fear. So dark was the place where we were confined, that we could not see our own hands, even when they touched our faces. After standing thus, melancholy and terrified, the bars were withdrawn, and our master entered with a lanthorn and a basket, in which was abundance of pork

and Indian corn, boiled whole, and still warm, to be eaten as bread. In a surly manner, he ordered us to take our supper quickly, that we might be ready to turn out in the morning to work. Young and hungry, we were not long in dispatching our meal, when, pointing to a quantity of dry grass at one end of our prison (for I can call it by no other name), he lifted his lanthorn, and left us to ruminate upon our melancholy situation and dreary prospects under such a taskmaster. None of us felt inclined to speak; yet it was some time ere any of us could close our eyes, in consequence of the noise made by the bull-frogs in a swamp near the farm. If we had not heard them as we approached the place, and inquired what caused the, to us, strange sounds, we would have been terribly alarmed. Tired nature at length prevailed, and I sank asleep. Before sunrise next morning, the harsh voice of our master, whip in had, roused us from repose. We started up, and followed him into the enclosure in front of his barn and house.

This was an oblong square, enclosed with stout wooden paling, very thickly set, on the banks of a beautiful stream. At one side were the buildings, composed entirely of wood —the forest, which extended as far as the eye could reach, was at no great distance in the rear—everything around indicated the greatest plenty of all that was necessary for the enjoyment of life, as far as food could administer to it; there were several cows and horses, sleek and fat, feeding under a shed; brood sows, with numerous progenies; and fowls actually swarming around. The morning was beautiful; the air, filled with a thousand grateful odours from the fields, imparting to our young minds a buoyancy we had been strangers to since we had left our own native shores. Our hasty survey was made in a few minutes, while we stood waiting further orders. Our master, who had entered another part of the building, returned, accompanied by two of the most miserable-looking men I had

ever seen—as wretchedly clad as I was myself, with the exception that they had broad straw-hats upon their heads. Misery and they seemed to have been long intimates; my heart sank within me at their appearance; both had wooden clogs, consisting of a cut of about a foot long from the branch of a tree, chained to their right leg at the ancle; and this they carried over their arm. In addition, one of them had a stout collar round his neck, from which projected three iron hooks, about a foot from his head. We burst into tears, thinking we were to be similarly equipped, and would have fled, had flight been possible; all the riches in the world we would have counted a mean reward to the person who would have transported us from the tyrant's farm-yard to the beautiful hills and valleys of Scotland. As they came to where we stood gazing through our tears, three tall, bony, sallow-looking lads, sons of the proprietor, issued from the principal building, with implements upon their shoulders, one of which was given to each of us, and we were now to begin our work. Before we proceeded, our master said to us, in his harsh manner—

'Mind ye, lads, you are my bound servants for three years, to do my will—mayhap for more. If you offer to run away, I will catch you again; and, besides punishment, dress you so—and he pointed with malicious triumph to his victims—to prevent your running; and, mark me, for every day you are absent, you serve me two.'

In spite of his threat, I believe there was not one of us who did not resolve to make his escape from him the first opportunity. Had he treated us kindly, we would have obeyed him with pleasure, nor thought of anything but completing our period of service; but humanity was foreign to his nature, and short-sighted avarice alone possessed all his thoughts. He had himself been a convict in his youth; but had for many years been free, and had purchased, when it was yet part of the forest, the lot of land he now cul-

tivated. All had been the creation of his own labour, and he was proud of it to excess. When in good humour, which was seldom the case, his feats against, and escapes from, the Indians, and praises of his lands, were the only things upon which he was loquacious.

We soon learned that our two companions in misery were government convicts, and very bad characters; both had been guilty of many crimes, and were so hardened that nothing but the strictest surveillance and coercion could keep them in subjection. They were like tigers in chains, and threatened the most fearful revenge, as soon as the period of their servitude expired. This they did openly to his face; and not a day passed without an altercation, or without some punishment being inflicted upon them, when they would threaten again until they were tired, and wish that the Indians might give us a hot wakening before morning, and yield them an opportunity of making tobacco pouches of the scalps of the master and his sons.

I often wondered how he kept his temper; he seemed to treat them with scorn—for his cool, calculating mind had so long been familiar with the perils of his situation, that he heeded them not so long as he conceived himself secure. To us three youths, who trembled at his voice, he was not excessively cruel, further than working us almost beyond our strength. From sunrise to sunset, we were allowed no intervals but a few minutes to swallow our food, of which we had abundance and to spare.

'Eat well, work well,' he used to say, 'is American fashion.'

I had been with him about six months, and was literally naked; my skin had become hard and brown as an Indian's; all my clothing consisted of some pieces of sheep skin I had contrived for winter wear, and a straw hat of coarse enough manufacture, which I had plated and made

for myself on the Sabbath-days, to screen me from the intolerable glare and heat of the sun. Our appearance gave us no concern, for we were completely excluded from all intercourse with human beings, except those upon the plantation; and strangers were seldom seen in our neighbourhood. At the time I speak of, our master had been down to Baltimore, with a waggon load of produce, consisting of pork and salted beef, &c. He had made an excellent market, and returned in a fit of good humour; at our return from labour, he called us three into the house, as we were passing to our prison, to be locked up for the night. We were surprised at the invitation, for we had never been within the walls of the dwelling-house, As soon as we entered, he inquired if we would purchase any clothing from him, seeing we were so much in want of them. Scarcely could we believe our ears and eyes, when, opening a box, he displayed canvas jackets, trousers, and check shirts.

'You surely mean to make sport with us,' said I; for you know well that we have not one farthing among us three to purchase the smallest necessary.'

'That, I guess, is not of much matter,' he replied, in his quiet, husky manner, 'if I choose to give you a long credit.'

We at once agreed to his own terms, and I signed a bond for one hundred dollars, for a pair of coarse canvas trousers, a jacket of the same, two check shirts, and a good straw hat. My heart misgave me when I saw his peculiar smile, as he placed my bond in his pocket-book. Pleased as I was with my finery, I feared I had done wrong, but did not know to what extent until next morning, when we joined the convicts at labour. As soon as they saw us in our new dresses, they burst out into a loud laugh.

'Oh!' said they, 'has the old villain limed his birds already? Poor greenhorns, you have sold yourselves for

years to come. How are you to redeem the debts you have incurred, and others you must yet incur, but by new engagements? He has you in his toils." And they again laughed aloud.

We resumed our labour with heavy hearts; despondency came upon us, and we began to droop and pine. At night, when we retired to rest, and, until overpowered by fatigue and sleep, we talked of nothing but plans of escape. Numbers were formed and abandoned; to fly to the forests, we must perish through hunger and fatigue, or wander on, unknowing where to go; in the direction of the coast, was still more impracticable, for all the planters were in league with each other, to prevent the escape of the convicts and palantines, and no one could travel unmolested, without a certificate of his freedom. Our situation appeared to us truly without remeid, and bitterly did we lament our cruel fate.

Fortunately for us, we had—more to have something to keep a lingering hope of escape awake, than with any prospect of success—for several Sundays employed ourselves in undermining a part of the clay floor under the dried grass upon which we slept. The hole passed under the logs; and we had ascertained that it would be opened behind a wild vine that spread its luxuriance over a great part of the side and roof of our prison. We did not open it at the outside, but contented ourselves by pushing a thin piece of a branch through, lest we had been discovered by the lynx eyes of our master and his sons. For weeks, things had remained in this state, we resolving to run for it, and again our hearts failing us, when one night we were aroused out of our sleep by fearful cries, mixed with the firing of rifles. It was the war-whoop of the Indians, who had come down on a plundering expedition, and to avenge some old aggression our master had perpetrated upon them. So well had they concerted their plans, that the house was

surrounded before any one knew of their being in the neighbourhood. We lay still and trembled, nor knew what was passing without. Rifle after rifle cracked, amidst the whooping of the Indians; no one came to release us from our confined place, and we were afraid to venture out by our hole, lest we should be perceived by the savages, and murdered; for we had been informed that, in a case like the present, they gave no quarter to man, woman, or child. At length, we could both smell and hear the crackling of fire raging without. In agony we dashed upon the door; it resisted our utmost effort; even death by the Indians, was preferable to death by fire in our present situation—it was horrible and astounding—the noise, too, was dreadful—animals and men, all the inmates of the enclosure, were uttering their wildest cries, and rushing round it in distraction. The fire had caught the place we were in. I entered our mine, and, by convulsive efforts, forced off the little turf and earth we had left. I crawled out, never rising from my belly, for I could perceive the Indians, like fiends, running about in all directions, anxiously gazing upon every object. The glare of the burning buildings cast a deep red ray of light around, rendering all fearfully distinct—my companions followed me—fortunately some tall bushes concealed us from the Indians as we crawled along the ground like serpents. The building we had left we saw was now burning most furiously; and the yelling continued. Thus we lay along upon the ground, trembling lest we would be discovered every moment. The Indians were passing and repassing where we lay, with their piercing eyes bent upon the smouldering ruins. The roof fell in, and no one appearing to issue out, they retired towards the dwelling-house, where the fire of rifles was still kept up, and the flames making fearful progress. I have been in several battles, both by sea and land; but no sound ever met my ears so appalling as the shout that

arose when the unfortunate inmates burst forth to force their way through their foes, or sell their lives as dearly as they could. The firing almost immediately ceased, and a fearful stillness ensued, almost as unbearable in our present situation as the former tumult. The ruins still continued to smoulder, and we feared even to breathe, lest we should betray ourselves to the Indians.

At length the sun shone forth in all his glory upon the smoking ruins—our drooping spirits were partly revived, and we crept to the edge of the bushes, and timidly looked around—no human being was to be seen, and, after some time, we ventured to rise to our feet. The Indians appeared to have retired to the forest with their booty, and we ventured forth. A sight the most appalling soon met our eyes—there, close by each other, the old man and two of his sons lay mangled and scalped; the other had been consumed in the house, having doubtless been shot from without, and unable to leave it with the others. Soon the nearest proprietors began to ride up to the scene of murder and desolation, armed to the teeth, but too late to give any assistance. The bodies of the two convicts were not found; many believed they had either gone off or been carried off by the Indians. Being heartily sick of America, I returned to Baltimore, where I did labouring work for a few months, until I had got myself well clothed; then agreed with the captain of a Greenock vessel to work my passage to Scotland, where I arrived, after an absence of two years and three months. Such is an instance of the nefarious system of which I was a victim."

THE PARSONAGE:

MY FATHER'S FIRESIDE.

After the lapse of about thirty years, I lately paid a visit to what had once been my father's fireside. It was in the month of October that I visited the manse of Kirkhall. My father had been minister of that parish; and I received a kindly welcome from his worthy successor—one of the warmest-hearted and most learned men in the Church of Scotland, whom I have long known and esteemed as a brother. I found myself again seated beside the hearth in the little parlour which was once gladdened with a mother's smile—which was once cheered with the childish sports of brothers and sisters—which was hallowed by the prayers and presiding virtues of an affectionate father. They are all departed to the land of spirits!

Yet, on looking round me, every object seemed to assure me that they were still near—for almost everything else was unchanged. On looking through the window from the elbow-chair in which I sat, the old and magnificent lime tree, which, in the days of my youth, spread its branches and foliage in wide luxuriance over the court, and gave assurance of shade and shelter, was still unscathed. Its sweet-scented flowers were indeed faded—for the breath of approaching winter had touched its verdure; but its variegated green and yellow leaves were the same as when I had seen them, and attempted, with boyish hands, to imitate, nearly half a century ago. A little farther off, the "decent church" peered from among the majestic ash, elm, and chestnut trees, with which it was surrounded—the growth

of centuries—casting a deep and solemn shadow over the place of graves. The humble offices, and the corn-yard in which I had rejoiced to mingle in rural occupations and frolic, were near; and nothing was wanted to realize the scenes of my youth, save the presence of the venerable patriarch and my mother, and their little ones grouping around their knees, or at the frugal board.

But the illusion was short-lived. A holly tree, in the adjoining parterre, caught my eye. When I knew it of old, it was a little bush, in which the goldfinch and the linnet nestled, and were protected under my juvenile guardianship; but, now, it had grown up to a stately tree. I saw, in the mirror over the mantelpiece, the image of my own visage, in which there were lines that time and the world's cares imprint on the smoothest brow and the most blooming cheek. The yellow locks of my forehead were fled, and the few remaining hairs were beginning to be silvered with grey. My son, too, rising almost to manhood, stood up before me, unconscious of the recollections and visions which flitted through my mind. These things dispelled my reverie; and my wandering thoughts were recalled to the realities of the passing hour.

It was on a Saturday evening that I thus revisited Kirkhall; and my melancholy meditations were soon partially dissipated by the cheerful, but moderate hospitalities of my host; which were truly such as to make me feel that I was, as it were, among mine own kindred, and at my *father's fireside*.

What a flood of emotions and remembrances spring forth at the mental utterance of these words! On retiring from the parlour, I was ushered into what was, of old, denominated, in the quaint colloquial language of Scotland, "The Prophet's Cham'er"—that is, the apartment for study, which was to be found thus distinguished in all the old manses of our clergy. It was now a bedroom, the library being

established in another apartment; and I laid my head upon the pillow in a chamber which was consecrated, in my memory, by the recollection that within its walls good men had often thought of "the ways of God to man," and prepared their spirits, in the depths of silence and seclusion, for proclaiming in the sanctuary the glad tidings of salvation.

It was a tempestuous night; and, though the blast was completely excluded from the manse by the dense masses of trees with which it was surrounded, the wind howled and moaned through their branches and on their summits, and, like the thunder, gave forth a solemn music to the soul. I did not sleep, but listened to the sounds of the tempest with that pleasure which philosophy cannot explain. Ere long, the current of thought reverted to my own former relations, to the dwelling in which I reposed; and busy memory, in the watches of the night, supplied, with all the freshness of a recent event, the circumstances which chequered the life and marked the character of my father. Though, perhaps, in the estimation of many, these were commonplace, yet, to me, they were still full of interest; and, as they seem to afford a true and undistorted picture of a Scottish clergyman's real character and fortunes, I have written them down to fill a spare corner in the *Tales of the Borders*.

William Douglas was the eldest son of a farmer in one of the northern counties of Scotland. The family had been tenants of the farm of Mains for five successive generations; and, so far as tradition and the humble annals of the parish could be relied on, had borne an unspotted name, and acquired that hereditary character for worth, which, in their humble station, may be regarded as constituting the moral nobility of human nature. Just and devout in their lives —sincere, unpretending, and unaffected in their manners— they were never spoken of but with respect and goodwill

by their neighbours; and were often, in the domestic and rural affairs of the vicinity, the counsellors and umpires, in whose good sense, and integrity, and kindness of heart, their humble friends trusted with confidence. Such characters and families are to be found in almost every rural district of this country; for, "though grace gangs no' by generation, yet there is sic a thing as a hawk o' a guid nest." I believe in the homely proverb, though some metaphysicians may dispute it, but whether debatable or not in the abstract, William Douglas had the good fortune, as he deemed it, to grow up in the bosom of a family in which the characteristic of worth was cherished and transmitted as an heirloom.

The eldest son of the guidman of Mains showed an early fondness for his school exercises, and acquired, under the tuition of *Roaring Jock*, the dominie of the parish, a tolerable proficiency in the rudiments of literature. The guidman, being an elder of the kirk, was often at the minister's manse, and the bairns from Mains were occasionally invited to tea on the Saturdays and play-days; and Paplay, the minister, (was so denominated, from the name of a small estate of which he was the laird), showed great favour to the "auldest callant," and often conversed with him about the subject of his reading. In these circumstances, and considering the religious character of the Mains family, it was almost a matter of course that Willie should be destined by his parents, and prompted by his own predilections, to "the ministry." And, by the advice of Paplay and Roaring Jock, Willie was sent to the Marischal College at Aberdeen, where he gained a bursary at the competition, and prosecuted his studies with assiduity, until, at length, in the fulness of time, he became a licentiate of the church.

The only thing I remember to have heard connected with this period of my father's life, was his anecdotes of Paplay's eccentricities, which were numerous—some of them

personal, and some of them the peculiarities of the old school of clergy in Scotland. He was a pious and orthodox man; but withal had a tincture of the Covenanter about him, blended with the aristocratic and chivalrous feeling of a country gentleman of old family. In the troubled times, about the years 1745-6, he was a staunch Whig; and so very decided in his politics, that, when "Prince Charlie's men" had the ascendancy in Scotland, he was either in arms or in hiding; and when he ventured to preach, he wore his sword in the pulpit, and a blue coat, girt with a belt, in which a pair of pistols were hung—more like a man of war than a preacher of peace! Even after the defeat at Culloden, the Jacobitism of the north was so strong, and Paplay was so obnoxious, by reason of his vehement preaching against popery, and prelacy, and the Pretender, that he continued long after to wear his sword (in the pulpit and elsewhere), which was rather a formidable concern to the nonjurors about him, in the hand of a brave and athletic champion of true Whiggery. He assigned three reasons for wearing his sword after it seemed to some of his friends to be unnecessary:—"First, because I am a gentleman; secondly, because I can use it; and, thirdly, because, if you doubt, you may try." Among some of his oddities, he had a great admiration of a well-spring, a white calf, and a bonny lass; and he never passed any of them in his way without doing them homage. Though travelling on horseback, he would dismount to bathe his feet in a limpid stream, as it gushed from the earth, or to caress a white calf, or to salute a female—all which fantasies were united with the most primitive innocence. And he never ate a meal, even in his own house, or when he was a refugee in a hay stack or kiln barn, without exacting from his wife and friends the most urgent *pressing*.

It was under the auspices of this warlike and singular apostle that my father was ushered into the sacred office of

a minister of the gospel. He preached his first sermon in the church of his native parish; and, according to the fashion of the times, at the close of the service, the parish minister publicly criticised the discourses of the day. The young preacher, in this instance, found favour in Paplay's eyes; and his testimony in favour of the *plant* which had sprung up among them was so emphatic, and rendered so piquant by his odd figures of speech, that William Douglas was long distinguished among his friends and neighbours by the familiar designation of *Paplay's Plant.*

But there was another *plant* that graced the manse, which was not unobserved or unadmired by the young preacher—Jane Malcolm (the daughter of a clergyman in a more remote parish, and niece of Paplay's lady), a sweet flower, that had grown up in the wilderness, like "a daisy on the mountain's side." It was in the nature of things that "the loves of the plants" should be illustrated by the juxtaposition of the two favourite flowers of the chivalrous parson. An affectionate but secret attachment naturally grew out of the frequent visits which "Paplay's Plant" paid to the manse; and these were multiplied in consequence of William Douglas being appointed assistant to his spiritual patron, whose decline into the vale of years had begun to abate the energy of his character, and to render assistance necessary. The attachment between the young people might be suspected, but was not formally made known to Paplay and "the lady," as she was called, according to the courtesy of the olden time. Indeed, such a promulgation would have been idle; for the "half-reverend" assistant (as Paplay was wont to address the young probationers of the church) had no immediate prospect of a benefice, although he was an acceptable preacher, throughout the bounds of the presbytery. But an incident occurred which facilitated the union, of which the preliminaries were thus established.

The Earl of Bellersdale,* a nobleman in the neighbouring county, who affected to be descended from an ancient family that flourished in the days of good King Duncan, but who had really no more connection with it than with Hercules or the Man in the Moon, reared a village or seaport at a short but convenient distance from his magnificent castle. Among the other items in the arrangements which were destined to immortalise the munificence of the Earl in the establishment of Bellerstown, a church was deemed necessary for political, to say nothing of moral considerations; and the earl, being a man of taste, thought that a church, placed in a particular position, would make a fine vista from various points in the noble park which surrounded the Castle of Bellersdale. A picturesque chapel was accordingly built on a rising knoll, separated from the pleasure grounds and the castle by a river, over which a handsome bridge made no mean addition to the lordly scene.

The chapel being built, and endowed with a stipend of "forty pounds a-year" (the hint, I suppose, was taken from Oliver Goldsmith), it was necessary to provide a clergyman to officiate in it; and William Douglas being one of the most approved young men in the district, had the honour to be preferred by the patron. The period to which I now refer was long before the church, in its wisdom, enacted a law for regulating chapels of ease; and not only the amount of stipend, but the continuance of clergymen who officiated in such chapels, depended on the arbitrary and sovereign will of their pious founders. Bellerstown, though a step in William Douglas' professional progress, yielded too scanty a revenue to admit of matrimony; but the talents, respectability, and prepossessing manners of the chaplain made him a favourite at the castle, and rendered

* A little reflection will enable the reader to see what true name this fictitious one is intended to cover.—Ed.

it practicable to eke out the slender living by the addition of a small farm, at what was called a moderate rent. But this appendage, too, was held by the same precarious tenure—Lord Bellersdale's will. The probationer was inducted as pastor of the Bellerstown chapel, according to the rules of the church; and, after the lapse of a few months, he and Miss Jane Malcolm thought—although no other person thought—that they might venture to enter into the holy bands of wedlock, and, with frugality and mutual love in their household, look forward to happiness in their humble and unambitious sphere of life. This thought ended in deed—and they were married.

The tenor of a clergyman's life is, in general, even and unvaried, consisting of a faithful and regular discharge of his peculiar duties. Such, for some years, was the fate of William Douglas. He acquired the confidence and affections of his humble flock—the esteem of his brethren—the countenance of the neighbouring gentry—and even the patronage of the great man, at whose table he was a frequent and welcomed guest. Mrs. Douglas had presented him with two sons: and his parents, advanced in years, were gathered to their fathers. This bereavement was not unlooked for; but the first trial of life which wrung his heart to the core, was a fatal illness which, in a few days, snatched the object of his most tender affection from him.

Time passed on, and "brought healing on its wings." After the lapse of several years, my father felt that it was not meet for man to be alone; and, whilst he cherished the fondest remembrance of his first domestic companion, he had too much good sense to go into the affectation of continuing single during the rest of his life "for her sake;" more especially as he had no female relative to whom he could confide the maternal charge of his boys in their nursery days. He accordingly discerned, in the daughter of one of his flock, a respectable farmer in the neighbourhood,

those personal attractions and amiable dispositions which awakened his manly sympathies; and, too high-minded to stoop to mercenary considerations, he married a second time, without hunting for a *tocher*, as is sometimes imputed sarcastically to the Scottish clergy. Isobel Wilson was lovely and virtuous.

About the time the American war ended, I came into this earthly part of the universe; but nothing occurred for several years of my father's life to diversify the peaceful enjoyments of his domestic life, or to interrupt the conscientious and zealous discharge of his pastoral duties. At length, however, a cloud gathered in the firmament, which ere long burst on his head, in the wrath of his patron, the Earl of Bellersdale.

Local, rather than general politics agitated the district in which his humble life was cast; and there was a vehement struggle betwixt his lordship and a neighbouring nobleman for ascendancy in the county. The ranks of either party were swelled by the multiplication of freehold qualifications, for the purpose of acquiring votes. One of the expedients, as is well known, for the attainment of such objects, is the creation of nominal and fictitious voters, by conferring on the *friends* of a political party an apparent, but not a real interest in a landed estate; and this is practised and justified by a legal fiction, and a little casuistry, with which political agents are quite familiar. The ordinary mode in these cases, is to confer such *parchment* franchises on dependents and personal connections of the great man who needs their support—and the Earl of Bellersdale, who had the patronage of many churches of greater or less value, found, even among the clergy who had hopes of preferment from his hand, several individuals sufficiently unscrupulous to accept of such discreditable titles to a political franchise as freeholders.* Amongst others, my father, who was in

* This was written in 1829, before the Reform Act was dreamt of.—Ed.

good odour at the castle, was deemed a *likely* person to be intrusted with so precious a privilege as a right to vote for any tool of the earl who might be brought forward as a candidate for representing the shire in Parliament. The factor was despatched to Bellerstown to offer this high behest to the poor parson, whose ready compliance was expected, *as a matter of course.* But he calmly and peremptorily refused the proffered vote, and intimated that he held it derogatory to the sacred nature of his office to pollute himself with such politics, and inconsistent with every principle of honour, morality, and religion, to take an oath, as required by law, that he was possessed of a landed estate, while, in truth, he had no earthly title to an inch of it. This scrupulosity gave mortal offence at the castle; and the recusant parson was doomed to ridicule as a pious fool, and to ruin. And as, in such cases, when an offending individual is completely dependent on the offended party, pretexts are never wanting for cloaking the lurking purpose of mischief: these were soon and easily discovered. If the minister of Bellerstown discoursed on integrity and truth as Christian virtues, or on the sacredness of an oath, the earl's underlings bore the tidings to the castle, where such doctrine was deemed high treason against the electioneering morality; and the faithful and fearless minister of religion having rebuked, from the pulpit, some gross and public enormities and violations of the Sabbath by the canvassers for the earl's candidate, within the precincts of his pastoral charge, this was a sad and unpardonable aggravation of his rebellion. Nay, having published a little tract on the duty of attending public worship, of which he was the known author, this was regarded as a direct personal insult to the lord of the manor — because his lordship was so much engrossed with politics and his other affairs, that he had, for some time, ceased entirely to go to church. These little incidents were aggravated by the perfidy of the parson of

the parish within which Mr. Douglas' chapel was situated. That gentleman had formed a scheme for transferring his residence from the ancient manse, in a remote part of the parish, to the more populous and flourishing burgh of barony of Bellerstown—intending to officiate himself in the chapel (receiving, of course, the additional accommodation applicable to that cure), and consigning the care of the souls in the parish church to the schoolmaster—a preacher whom he satisfied with a bonus of £10 or £12 a-year. And for the accomplishment of this object, it was no difficult thing, as matters stood, to ingratiate himself into the patron's favour, and to accomplish his own personal objects, by whispering into the earl's greedy ear every remark that would suit his purpose, made by Mr. Douglas, in the most unbounded confidence of private intercourse and seeming friendship.

When the wrath which had accumulated in the heart of the earl was fanned to its height, he issued his orders to the factor in the following decree:—"Rackrent—*Us*"—(a grammatical singularity which his lordship always used, surpassing even the royal or editorial majesty, indicated by the first person plural)—"*Us* is determined to root out that rebellious fellow Douglas, and to banish him from our grounds. Rackrent, order Spulzie, the scribe, instantly to serve the fellow with a summons of removing from Stable-barns; and, do you hear, go to Bellerstown, lock and nail up the chapel door, and tell the fellow that he shall never preach there again against *us*. Tell him to go to the devil, as *us* will not suffer rebels against our will."

This mandate was instantly obeyed. Mr. Douglas received the intimation from Rackrent with surprise, but undismayed; and, his "courage swelling as the danger swells," he accepted the intimation as a testimony to his fidelity, and pitied the tyrant who had thus abused his authority. The earl had the uncontrolled power—there

was no appeal from his heartless decree. Rackrent speedily promulgated in the burgh the purport of his mission, and ostentatiously performed his task of shutting up the chapel —putting the key in his pocket. Consternation, and sympathy with their "ain guid minister and his wife and bairns," spread from house to house; and it was not till the shadow of night afforded shelter from observation, that even a few true friends mustered courage to venture into the house of a proscribed man, and to cheer him with their condolence.

Mr. Douglas had an instinctive courage, which prompted him to bear Rackrent's message without a quiver on his countenance, save perhaps a momentary expression of scorn on his lip, and a sparkle of indignation in his keen blue eye. But, after the minion of power had retired, and he felt himself alone, a cold and chilling emotion gathered round his heart. He went immediately to the nursery, where his wife was busied in tending and amusing her children; and having desired Grace Grant (our attached and only servant, who never was in any other service) to look after her matters in the kitchen, he communicated to his dear Isobel, that she and her little ones were thrown destitute. I was too young (being only four or five years of age at the time) to understand the import of what he said. But my mother and the elder children knew it well; and I need not describe the scene. The tears which a brave man sheds are only those of tenderness and affection—but these are, indeed, tears of bitterness. Such scenes of love and agony are too sacred to be disclosed to an unfeeling world; and all I remember of the one now alluded to, was, that my heart was like to break when I saw those around me embracing and embraced, in tears and in silence, save the sounds of sobs which burst from every bosom.

It was a day of sorrow. Even the youngsters forgot, for a time, that they required their wonted frugal dinner; and it was not until twilight succeeded the last blaze of the

setting sun, that Grace Grant called her mistress from the nursery (having heard from a neighbour the adversity which had befallen), to remind her that tea was ready. My mother was now much composed, and invited the minister to go to the parlour. It was a silent procession. My eldest brother carried me in his arms; and my father led his wife in one hand, while he bore their younger babe on his other arm. On reaching the parlour, we found tea prepared by the careful hands of Grace Grant; but, before sitting down to partake of that comforting refreshment, the minister proposed to offer up a prayer of resignation to the will of God, and of hope and trust in his providence.

"Then kneeling down to Heaven's eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
Hope 'springs exulting on triumphant wing,'
That thus they all shall meet in future days;
There, ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear;
Together hymning their Creator's praise—
In such society yet still more dear,
While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere.'

These devout aspirations being ended, an air of calm composure reigned around my "Father's Fireside." He seated himself in his arm-chair, while my mother busied herself in preparing tea, and each little one took his appointed place around the oval wainscot table. The tur fire burned cheerily on the hearth. The tea-kettle gave out its hissing sounds, indicative of comfort; and the solitary candle diffused light on the fair young faces which brightened as the oat-cake and the "buttered pieces" began to disappear. But the minister's wonted playfulness was gone; and the decent silence of a Sabbath afternoon was observed even by the younger boys.

The visits of their friends were a solace in the first hours of their unlooked-for adversity. But, after their retirement,

the vague, undefined, and gloomy shadows which rose to the contemplation of my parents, with respect to their future prospects, yielded only a troubled and unutterable anxiety. Repining and supineness, however, were not suited to my father's character; for, with mildness, he united decision and even boldness of spirit. He had, for several years previous to this explosion of lordly despotism in the patron of his chapel, corresponded with some of his college friends in the new Republic of America; and had been encouraged by them, and through them, by one of the most distinguished of the American patriots, to leave his meagre benefice and cross the Atlantic. These invitations he had declined; being warmly attached to his flock, to the Established Church of Scotland, to his friends at home, and to his country. In his altered circumstances, however—severed as he was by an arbitrary act over which there was no moral or legal control, cast destitute from the altar at which he had ministered with usefulness and acceptance, and having no claims to immediate patronage in the church—he resolved, with a heavy heart, to betake himself to that field of exertion in a foreign land to which he had been so courteously invited. Having adopted this resolution, he did not waste time in idle whining, but prepared to encounter all the inconveniences and perils of a long voyage across the deep; aggravated, unspeakably, by the accompaniments of a wife and six young children, and hampered by the scanty means which remained to him amidst this wreck of his hopes of happiness at home.

But before his final departure from the cold and rocky shore of Scotland for ever, he wished to take a public leave of his flock. His own chapel had been shut up; but a reverend friend, in a closely adjoining burgh, acceded at once to his request, that he might have the use of his pulpit on the Sunday after the act of ejection which I have already mentioned. The villagers of Bellerstown were speedily

apprised of their minister's intention; and they and many others attended to hear his farewell sermon. The church was crowded with an affectionate and even somewhat exasperated multitude, and the service of the day was characterised by a more than usual solemnity. All the energy of the preacher's spirit was called up to sustain him on so trying an occasion; and the unaffected, earnest, and native eloquence of his pulpit appearances, were heightened by the emotions which struggled within his bosom.

His brief but christianlike and dignified address, in which the tremulous voice of deep emotion was occasionally mingled with the manly tones of bolder elocution, was listened to in silence deep as death; and when he descended from the pulpit, Mr. Douglas was surrounded by a throng of elders, and young men, and humble matrons, who were eager to manifest their heartfelt reverence for their beloved pastor.

It were tedious and profitless to detail all the painful circumstances which intervened betwixt the time now referred to and that of the minister's embarkation. He experienced, on the one hand, all the petty vexations which the earl's sycophants could devise for his annoyance—and, on the other, much of that comfort which springs from spontaneous tokens of disinterested goodwill and of gratitude, even from the poor and humble; but the *mens conscia sibi recti* enabled him to bear the former with composure, and the latter without vain presumption.

The day of departure at length arrived—and, young as I was, I still remember as well as yesterday some of the circumstances. The family proceeded from the only home I had ever known, towards the harbour, accompanied by some of the most respectable inhabitants of the village.

After passing by the chapel, which stood conspicuously on a rising ground, the party descended a steep road—like a patriarch of old going on a pilgrimage through the world,

with his children around him—to the quay at which the vessel that was to bear us away was moored. The sea beach and quays were crowded. The entire population of the burgh seemed assembled. There were no shouts; but uncovered heads, and outstretched hands, and old visages glistening with tears of kindness, spoke a language more eloquent than words can utter. I was carried with my mother on board the ship. The sails were unfurled, while we were grouped on the quarter-deck. Most of the family went into the cabin; but my father sat on a coil of ropes, and I stood between his knees, encircled by his arm, and looking up in his face, which was occasionally convulsed with marks of strong but suppressed feeling. The vessel bounded over the waves of the German Ocean. My father spake not. His eye was still bent on the rocky cliffs (near which stood his church and dwelling of peace), after it could not discern the people that clustered on their summits. He wrapped me in his cloak, and held me to his bosom; and, for the first time, I felt a sad consciousness that I was without a home in the world.

My first voyage in life was a rough one. The "Good Intent" of Bellerstown, in which my father and his family had embarked, as already stated, was a coasting trader, and was bound on this occasion for Leith, whence the patriarch of this intended emigration, and his partner, and little ones, were meant to be transferred to Greenock, as the port of final embarkation for the United States. To those who have had occasion to sojourn in such bottoms as the "Good Intent," ere yet the Berwick smacks and other vessels of a superior class had been established in the coasting trade of Scotland, it is needless to offer any description of such a vehicle for the conveyance of human beings—and those who have never experienced such a transit, can form no adequate conception of the misery which it exhibits. Let them, however, imagine a small and dirty cabin, into which no one is

admitted save by the companion-door and a small sky-light that cannot be opened in rough weather—let them imagine, if they can, the "villanous compound of smells," produced by confined air, the flavour of bilge water, agitated in the hold of the ship, and diffused through every creaking crevice, and pitch, and effluvia of rancid salt meat and broth, and the products of universal sea-sickness, altogether inevitable in such circumstances—let them figure such a confined hole filled with human beings, crammed into smaller holes all around, called beds, or laid on shake-downs upon the floor, or stretched upon the lockers, in that state of despondency which overwhelming sickness induces;—and they have a picture of the Good Intent's cabin and *state-room* during the voyage to which I refer. Nor was this all. The weather was boisterous, being the vernal equinox; the winds cross and tempestuous; and the waves of the sea so tremendous that the little vessel sunk, and rose, and rolled, as if each succeeding shock were the last ere she sank for ever into the roaring abyss; while each convulsion of the bark called forth involuntary moans and shrieks of distress, which were heard commingled with the whistling of the tempest, and the dash of the waves, that ever and anon burst on and swept over the deck. And thus, for the space of fourteen days went the Good Intent and her inmates, tossed to and fro on the German Ocean, with no comfort to mitigate the extreme of such unwonted sufferings, save the rough but hearty kindness of the skipper and crew, when their cares on deck left them a moment to go below, and offer any attention in their power. I have made many rough voyages since the time alluded to; but this one dwells on my memory like the visions in a wild and troubled dream, surpassing all I have since weathered in intensity of horror and dismay.

At length, the expected haven came in sight; and we entered it—safe but sad enough, the Good Intent entered

the Water of Leith at morning tide, and my childish wonderment was strangely excited by what seemed to my inexperienced eye a forest of masts and "leviathans afloat," as we were towed through among the vessels in harbour, until, amidst bawling and swearing on board and ashore, the Good Intent got a berth at the Coalhill of Leith. The emigrant party were all speedily taken on shore, and conveyed to a small inn, where soap and water, and clean clothes, and breakfast, revived, in no inconsiderable degree, the spirits of the whole party, after the exhaustion of such a voyage: and the youngsters, especially, were very speedily interested in the rude bustle which the shore of Leith usually exhibits.

Leaving the little colony at Mrs. Monro's ship tavern, on the Coalhill, my father proceeded to the dwelling of his cousin, Mr. Pearson, who resided in one of the western suburbs of Edinburgh (where he and his were expected), in order to announce the advent to a temporary home. It was after noon ere he returned with his cousin to conduct the rest of the family; and the whole party proceeded on foot up Leith Walk, and through a part of Edinburgh, towards Mr. Pearson's hospitable abode, astonished and bewildered in a scene so new. There we all received a warm welcome from the good old man and his daughters, and experienced every attention and kindness which good hearts and the ties of kindred could suggest.

Before proceeding to Greenock, to make the necessary arrangements for the final emigration, Mr. Douglas, while his family were refreshing with their relatives for a longer voyage than they had already encountered, paid a visit to an old friend, a clergyman in the country, in whose parish was situated the noble mansion of Earl H——. The countess of H—— was a relative of Lady B——, to whom Mr. Douglas had long been known as an exemplary clergyman, and who, in the day of his adversity and unmerited perse-

cution, had taken a lively interest in his fate. Amongst other acts of kindness, she had not only given him an introductory letter to the countess of H——, but had written previously, recommending him earnestly to her good offices with the earl (who was, in all respects, a complete contrast to Lord Bellersdale), and soliciting some one of the numerous benefices in the church of which the earl was patron, when a vacancy might occur. Mr. Douglas visited his friend before delivering his introduction at the great house, and preached on the Sabbath which intervened during his stay: and the services of the day having been conducted with that simple and unfeigned devoutness which lends its highest power to pulpit eloquence, the noble family, who regularly attended on religious ordinances in their parish church, were much affected and gratified with the ministration of the stranger on this occasion; and this effect was not marred to "ears polite," even by the slight "accents of the northern tongue." Next morning, the pastor of the parish received an invitation to dine at H—— House that day, and was requested to bring along with him the friend who had officiated for him on the preceding Sunday. The invitation was, of course, accepted; and, on being introduced to the earl and countess of H——, and his name being announced, Lady H—— inquired if he were of the north country, when he took the opportunity of delivering Lady B.'s introductory letter, which showed that Mr. Douglas was the same person of whom Lady B. had previously written. His reception by both the noble personages of the mansion was more than polite; it was kind in the highest degree, and every way worthy of a generous and high-minded race, whose good qualities have, in various periods of our history, given lustre to the nobility of Scotland. The day was spent with mutual satisfaction; and the earl, before parting, gave Mr. Douglas a cordial shake by the hand, and assured him that the first benefice that

should fall in his gift, should be conferred on him. Thus they parted; but Mr. Douglas returned to Mr. Pearson's, with the unaltered purpose of pursuing his voyage to America—the hopes inspired by the earl's spontaneous promise being too faint and remote, in their possible accomplishment, to induce procrastination in his proceedings. The love of his native country yearned in his bosom, and all the perils and privations to which his little fireside-flock might be exposed, passed through his thoughts as he drove along the southern shore of the Forth, on his return; but he could see no immediate alternative, save to go onward in the path which he had previously chalked out for himself in his present circumstances.

Accordingly, after a few days' repose, he set out to Greenock, to make arrangements for the passage to New York of himself and family. He applied to an eminent merchant there on the subject, in whose service, as a clerk, a favourite brother had lived and died. From that gentleman he received every courtesy and counsel suited to the occasion, and was offered the passage contemplated gratuitously. He had spent a day or two only in Greenock, making preparations for the voyage, when, having gone into the vessel in which he was destined to embark, to hold some necessary consultation with the master, a packet was brought to him which had been forwarded by Mr. Pearson to the care of Mr. B. the merchant. On unsealing it, Mr. Douglas found inclosed a presentation in his favour, by the Earl of H., to a living in one of the southern counties of Scotland!

It were idle in any one who has never experienced a sudden and unexpected transition in the endless vicissitudes of human life—from a position encompassed with doubts and darkness, into scenes and prospects of brighter omen—to attempt any delineation of Mr. Douglas' emotions on this occasion; for, who can express in language the throb of grati-

tude to benefactors, which, in such circumstances, swells the heart beyond the power of utterance?—or who can convey any adequate notion of the devout and silent thankfulness which exalts the soul of a good man, when he sees and feels, in such an event, the manifestation of that overruling Providence which it is his habitual principle to acknowledge and adore?

The American expedition was now abandoned, and Mr. Douglas returned from Greenock to Edinburgh, with all the despatch which the *Flies* of those days rendered practicable. The tidings were soon told, not with proud exultation, but with the chastened gladness which these were calculated to impress on his own spirit and all around him; and, instead of packing up for Greenock, and preparing for crossing the wide Atlantic, nothing was now talked of in Pearson's kind circle but *plenishing* for the manse.

The day of departure at length arrived, ere yet the young folks had recovered from the astonishment which everything in the northern metropolis presented to them as wonders, and before they had become familiar with the splendours of long rows of lamps, and dazzling scattered lights over the dusky horizon of the "Auld Toun" in an evening. One of the most startling of these marvels, I well remember, was the Cowgate, with its rows of lamps extending beneath the South Bridge, and seen through the iron balustrades! This was perfect enchantment to some of us; and I don't believe I have ever seen any scene of artificial magnificence, since I first looked down on the Cowgate, that made so strong an impression on me, as a specimen of city grandeur!

The vehicle for our conveyance was not, as in these latter days, a dashing stage-coach and four—for there was nothing of the kind on the public roads of Scotland fifty years ago—but a caravan or wagon, having a sort of rail round three sides of it, and covered overhead with a canvas

cloth on strong hoops, with an aperture behind to let in the travellers, and the fresh air, and the light. Under this primitive pavilion sat ensconced the parson and spouse on trusses of straw, and with blankets to keep warmth, if necessary—the bairns being all packed in and about them, according to their dimensions; and in this fashion on jogged the cavalcade, consisting of the caravan, and another long cart with furniture. Two or three days were required for the journey—the carriers stopping each night at convenient distances in country inns for the "entertainment of men and horses," where slight and rough accommodation only was to be had.

At length, on the third day, the caravansary reached the promised land—not like that in the Orient, flowing with milk and honey, and glowing in all the richness of natural beauty; but a long straggling village of heath-thatched cottages, with about half-a-dozen slated houses, including the kirk; and, though placed in a valley, on the banks of a rivulet, yet surrounded on all sides for many miles with the wildest moorlands in one of the most elevated situations inhabited in Scotland by human beings. But, what of all this? It afforded a *home* in our native land—and we soon learnt by experience that its inhabitants were among the most kind-hearted and intelligent of the sons of Caledonia.

The humble parsonage of Muirden was but a chapel of ease, yielding an income under one hundred pounds per annum. Yet, with this limited benefice, the Rev. William Douglas was enabled, by the frugal housewifery of the mistress, to maintain a decent, and, in his sphere, even a hospitable household, and to discharge the petty obligations to friends which he had incurred while "out of bread," and preparing to cross the deep to a foreign land. Until this last, and, in his estimation, sacred duty was accomplished, the strictest economy was observed. The "muckle

wheel" and the "little wheel" were heard humming incessantly in the kitchen; and the bairns were clad in the good home-made cloths of the domicile; while they were early taught practically that plain and wholesome, though humble fare at the board, was all that they ought to desire, and that luxuries and delicacies, such as load "the rich man's table," were truly a matter of small moment, and utterly despicable when compared with those luxuries of the mind, and that superiority of character, which are derived from moral and intellectual culture. These latter, accordingly, were day by day pressed on their attention as the proper business of their early life—and all were habituated to regular and constant attention to their "lessons," at home as well as in school.

Nor was this remote parsonage destitute of some strong and interesting attractions to a generous mind. Muirden was situated in a region which is consecrated by many events and traditions of "the persecuted times." There are hill-sides and moss-hags in its vicinity, still known to the peasant as the places of worship and of refuge to the Covenanters in days of peril and alarm; and some of Scotland's martyrs were immolated at the doors of their own huts, the foundation of which may still be traced, overgrown with the green turf or the heather-bell. To a Scottish pastor such scenes are classic, grand even in a higher sense than those of Marathon or Thermopylæ—for it was the immutable and holy spirit which was there kindled, and formed into a flame, that finally won for Scotland not only the blessings of civil liberty, but the triumphs of religious truth.

It was an inspiriting task to serve at the altar among a people who, though humble, cherished with fondness the memory of their godly forefathers; and was, indeed, a labour of love, in which the teacher and the taught found mutual comfort and advantage. Nor were the exercises of

the pulpit the only parts of pastoral duty to which Mr. Douglas directed his attention and his heart. He visited and soon became acquainted with all his flock—not formally and pompously, but frankly and in unaffected kindness; and ere long became the friend and trusted counsellor of his parishioners, not merely in spiritual, but in their temporal concerns. And, as a proof of the impression which such a truly evangelical course of conduct made among his people, I may state that, within these few years, after the lapse of nearly fifty, I had a call from a respectable old man, who, having heard I was in Edinburgh, had found me out, and announced himself to be Mr. ——, who had taught me the alphabet, and first guided my hand to wield the pen which now records this incident. I have rarely met with an occurrence more gratifying to my feelings, than when the old gentleman (for he was a gentleman in the best sense of the term, though a country schoolmaster) told me that years had not effaced from his heart and his memory the kindly affection which he bore to my father and all his children, who were the objects of his careful tuition, and that he had sought and found me to give utterance to that feeling. I need not say he got a warm welcome. He had then retired from the laborious duties of his office, with a moderate competency, and in a green old age. He has since paid the debt of nature. Peace to his ashes! It would be well if our parochial clergy would thus cultivate, not the vulgar arts of wordly popularity, but, by acts of real kindness, the confidence and the respect of their flocks. It is thus that the human heart is to be won; and it is thus that a Christian pastor most effectually

"Allures to brighter realms, and leads the way."

There was a peculiarity in the village of Muirden which I must not omit to notice. It was, perhaps, the first locality in Scotland, so entirely rural, that had a library established

in it. I do not know precisely the history of that institution; but its supporters were the general community of the place, who were, in different grades, employed chiefly in the working of some mines in the vicinity, who devoted a small portion of their wages, periodically, for the purchase of books for the library The fruits of this establishment were visible in the decent and orderly habits, and in the superior information of the whole population; presenting a moral picture exactly the reverse of that which too often characterises the now liberated *ascripti glebæ* who are usually engaged in such occupations, and who are proverbially the most barbarous and ignorant class of the community of Scotland—thus furnishing an example, which is now become pretty general, of supplying an interesting and improving employment of the hours of relaxation from labour, instead of misspending the precious intervals at the alehouse or other houses of debauchery.

The village of Muirden, too, had the advantage of a resident country gentleman in its immediate neighbourhood—Mr. Sterling. Such an auxiliary to the clergyman and schoolmaster in a rural district, is generally of unspeakable advantage to the moral condition of the locality, more especially when, as in this instance, he was a man everyway worthy of his rank and position in society. He possessed an estate of his own in one of the most beautiful provinces in Scotland; but, being a man distinguished in science, he had a general supervision of the works to which I have alluded; and, being thus clothed with authority, as well as a magistrate in the county, he was ever ready to co-operate in every measure which was beneficial, and in the repression of whatever was pernicious, in this little colony. The society and friendly intercourse which naturally arose betwixt such a country gentleman and the pastor, formed no slight addition to the enjoyments of the latter, in a sphere shut out by its position from much personal intercourse

with well-educated men; and, in short, amid mountain and moor all around, Muirden presented one of the most pleasing pictures that this country affords of a rural parsonage.

Mr. Douglas' zealous and faithful discharge of his pastoral duties did not remain unknown to his noble patron. From the time, indeed, of his induction at Muirden, the moral movements of that hamlet were occasionally reported by its guardian, Mr. Sterling, to the family that was interested in its prosperity; and the unremitting but unobtrusive ministrations of the village pastor were not of course overlooked. These were duly appreciated; and, after the lapse of only two or three years, the Earl of H—— spontaneously, and without any previous communication, presented Mr. Douglas to the benefice of Eccleshall, which had fallen vacant by the demise of its minister. This change had the double advantage of being on the regular establishment of the church, beyond the risk of any such casualty as had formerly befallen the presentee, and of having a stipend nearly double the salary at Muirden—a consideration of no slight moment to a man with a family, however moderate in his views with regard to temporalities; and it possessed the further superiority over Muirden, that it was situated on the southern shore of the Frith of Forth, in a district of country highly cultivated, and within a few hours' ride of the metropolis. It had the charm of the most perfect seclusion from the great and bustling world—the church and manse being situated in a sheltered valley, embosomed amidst a cluster of ancient trees, which probably were planted ere the Reformation dawned in Scotland.

The tidings of this promotion, as it may be deemed, produced, in the humble dwelling of the pastor of Muirden, that measure of gladness which is inspired by the smiles of fortune—varying in degree among the different members of the family according to their intelligence and their years.

To the heads of it, the promised improvement in their condition afforded the calm, yet exquisite satisfaction which the prospect of a competence for their little ones, and the means of educating and preparing them to act their part in life, naturally awakens; and in the younger members of it, the reported beauties of the new parish, and the approach of a new journey, excited that joyousness and vivacity of hope which even invests what is unknown with the attribute of magnificence.

After a little while devoted to necessary arrangements—after many visits paid to all the dwellings of the humble flock of Muirden—after the interchange of kindly hospitalities among the superior classes of his neighbours—and after a public and affectionate farewell to all—Mr. Douglas once more set out with his family on this, his last migration; and, with the aid of caravan and cart, the family party went on their way from Muirden to Edinburgh, retracing thus far their steps, on their journey to Eccleshall; and, in a few days, they were set down in the court before the manse of Eccleshall, over which two stately lime trees formed a cooling shade from the fervours of a summer sun.

Whether the reality corresponded with the several anticipations of the new comers or not, I will not pretend to affirm; but the arrival had scarcely been accomplished, ere every room and recess of the manse was explored, and the neat and beautiful gardens were traversed, and the glebe surveyed, and the "bonny burnside" visited, and the water laved from its channel. It was, in truth, a new world to its young visitants—and appeared, in the superior house accommodation and rural amenity around, a terrestrial paradise, contrasted with the circumscribed dwelling on the rocky shore of the German Ocean in the north, or in the hamlet of Muirden amid the wilderness on the southern border of Scotland. The sensations and sympathies of that

day, and of seven years which followed it, are yet fresh in my recollection, and still swell in my heart, as marking the brightest and the happiest period of my existence. Everything connected with that season of my life, is still invested in my memory with charms which I have never since tasted; and my young imagination clothed the vale of Eccleshall with a brighter verdure and gayer flowers than ever to me bloomed elsewhere on earth; and the heaven glowed in more resplendent sunshine than has ever since poured its golden radiance on my vision—for it was the sunshine of the young spirit still unclouded by a speck on its moral horizon, and undimmed by a tear of real suffering and sorrow. Are such youthful enchantments realities in the condition of man? or are they visions of fancy, which are kindled by a gracious dispensation of Providence, as a solace to the heart in riper years, when the cares, and toils, and anxieties of manhood are strewed thick in our path, and frown heavily in clouds over every stage of our progress?

In a few days after the house was put in order, the induction of Mr. Douglas took place; and, although not so impressive as a Presbyterian ordination, it was to all, his own family at least, an interesting scene. A numerous assemblage of the parishioners and the reverend brethren was convened; and the arrival of the latter, successively or in groups—their friendly greetings in the parlour, their progress to the church, and their solemn devoir during the service of the day—bore a character of dignity and impressiveness which does not now generally belong to such ceremonials. It may, perhaps, be unphilosophical, and not in accordance with more modern sentiment, to ascribe any efficacy to mere externals of costume. But it is a principle deeply implanted in human nature, and not to be stifled by any cold reasoning in the matter, that external decorum and suitable habiliments in any of the solemnities of religion and the administration of justice, have a powerful

effect on the great mass of mankind, which it is not wise to cast aside or contemn.

It were an easy, and would be a pleasant task, to paint some of the scenes and characters which presented themselves to my observation even at that early period of life; but it would be foreign to the object I had in view, and would swell this humble narrative beyond the limits assigned to it. That object was merely to delineate some of the features in the character of a faithful Scottish clergyman, and to exhibit some of the "lights and shadows" which cheer or cloud his existence, like that of other men. I have traced his progress through various alternations of adversity and prosperity, and have placed him in circumstances such as usually fill up the measure of a Christian's ambition—a position of usefulness to those within the sphere of his influence, and of comfort in his temporal condition. During the space of seven years, it was the lot of the individual who, in real life, was the prototype of our story, to enjoy health, and strength, and domestic felicity, and to discharge his duties with zeal and advantage in the parish of Eccleshall; but, returning home after nightfall, from attending a meeting of synod in Edinburgh, he caught a severe cold in riding during a stormy night, which affected his lungs; and, ere long, his indisposition assumed all the symptoms of pulmonary consumption.

Our tale of humble life now draws to a close. In the course of a few months, the indisposition of Mr. Douglas assumed all the symptoms of a settled consumption, which continued to present to his family and friends the alternations of hope and of fear, that are the unfailing companions of that subtle visitation. A sea voyage, native air, and all other expedients suggested by skill or affection, were tried in vain; and, in the fiftieth year of his age, the minister of Eccleshall returned to the bosom of his family, with a full anticipation that the distemper under which he lingered

would, ere long, prove fatal. His eyes sparkled with more than wonted lustre—his benevolent and intelligent countenance glowed with the delicate hectic flush which so often marks the progress of consumption—and the healthy, but not robust frame of its victim, became emaciated and feeble. The fall of the year 179-, brought the chilling blasts of November to quench the flickering spark of life in his bosom.

I was despatched one cold morning on the pony for Mr. Blythe, a neighbouring clergyman and friend, to pay my father a visit. We rode together from his manse to Eccleshall; and, on his arrival, he remained alone with my father, engaged in those hallowed communings betwixt a dying man and his spiritual comforter which it is unseemly and sacrilegious in any case to disclose to mortal eyes. After a considerable space thus spent, the whole family, including the servants, were, by my father's directions, summoned to the side of his couch, in the Red Room, where he reposed. When all were assembled, he intimated, with composure and resignation, that he was conscious of the near approach of death, and addressed a few sentences of admonition and affection to them all; and, having done so, he requested Mr. Blythe to unite with his household in prayer and praise—requesting that the last hymn in the beautiful collection of sacred lyrics attached to our national psalmody, might be sung. My father's pulpit psalm-book was brought to Mr. Blythe. It is now before me, and I transcribe, from its page, with a vivid recollection of the scene now referred to, one of the solemn stanzas of that touching anthem:—

> "The hour of my departure's come,
> I hear the voice that calls me home;
> At last, O Lord! let troubles cease,
> And let thy servant die in peace!"

Mr. Blythe breathed, rather than sung the hymn, in

the notes of Luther's hundredth psalm; and he did it with the accompaniment of tremulous and broken accents from all around the couch. The tears of unutterable sorrow were shed by all, save my mother, whose grief could not find a vent in tears. The voice of psalms was quenched amid the sobs which burst from every heart; and, during the singing of the last portion of it, the pious man who guided these orisons, sympathized so deeply in the passion of lamentation which encompassed him, that his accents were scarcely audible. The overpowering scene was closed by a brief and pathetic prayer to the Most High, that to His dying servant he would "stretch out His everlasting arms," and "to the friendless prove a friend."

A few hours more, and the scene of life had passed away from the mortal vision of William Douglas. I saw him die. It was the first deathbed I had ever seen. There are many occurrences in life which fill the mind with awe; but I have never been conscious of any emotion so profound and solemn as that which possessed me during the last day of my father's life. I witnessed the expiring flame in those dread moments when time is blent with eternity, and when the last sigh seems to waft the immortal spirit into a state of existence of which no adequate conception can be formed. After all was over, and the breath of life had fled, I could not believe my senses, that the prop of my affections was gone from my love and my embrace, and that all which remained on earth of my father, protector, and gentle monitor, was a lifeless wreck on the shore of time. The world appeared to my young eye and heart as a wide scene of mere darkness and desolation.

I will not dwell on subsequent events. The funeral obsequies performed, the family councils were of a melancholy description. As to worldly matters, it was ascertained that there was very little debt—not more than could be fully paid by the current stipend and other limited means;

but, beyond this, all was a dreary blank. The only means of subsistence to which my widowed mother could look with certainty, was her small annuity of £25 a-year; while one only of the family (the eldest boy, who had been educated as a surgeon, and had got an appointment in the East India Company's service) could do ought to eke out the means of life for the family. In the depth of her affliction, she would say, with pious confidence, in the language of scripture, "I have never seen the righteous man forsaken, or his seed begging their bread."

But, leaving these painful retrospects, it may not be inappropriate to note briefly the career of the earl of Bellersdale, whom I had occasion to advert to in the earlier part of this story. He survived my father many years, and spent his life devoid of domestic happiness or public respect, in the accumulation of wealth and the pursuits of sordid ambition. He lived detested and despised of mankind; and, dying unlamented by any one human being, he destined the vast treasures which he had amassed, to constant accumulation, not to be enjoyed fully by his heirs, but for the creation of a princedom of indefinite extent and wealth. But the honours of the Bellersdale family were speedily tarnished. A spendthrift successor squandered all the revenues which he could touch; and the last time I visited that part of the country, the splendid mansion of Bellersdale Castle was stripped of all its movables; the collections of many years of aristocratic pride—the pictures, the statues, the very board destined for baronial hospitality—were all brought to the hammer for payment of a tailor's bill for gewgaws to grace a court pageant; and the nominal inheritor of the wide domains and honours of his lordship's house, is an obscure and useless, though good-natured dependent upon Hebrew usurers and Gentile pettifoggers—a mere cumberer of the ground—a sycophant of the vulgar!

I need not point the moral of my tale.

THE SEERS' CAVE.

"The desert gave him visions wild—
The midnight wind came wild and dread,
Swell'd with the voices of the dead;
Far on the future battle-heath
His eye beheld the ranks of death:
Thus the lone seer, from mankind hurl'd,
Shap'd forth a disembodied world."

SCOTT.

IN a certain wild and romantic glen in the Highlands of Scotland, there is a cave opening beneath the brow of a huge overhanging cliff, and half concealed by wreathed roots and wild festoons of brier and woodbine. Several indistinct traditions remain of this cave's having been, in former days, the abode of more than one holy hermit and gifted seer. From these it derived the name which it commonly received, Coir-nan-Taischatrin, or, The Cave of the Seers. At a little distance within the glen, upon its sunny side, stood Castle Feracht. The elevation on which it was built, gave it a prospect of the whole glen, without detaching it from the hills and woods around; and a space had been cleared of trees, so that, though completely surrounded, their leafy screen only curtained, not obscured it.

Castle Feracht had long been the residence of a powerful branch of the Macphersons. In that far retirement repeated generations of that daring family had grown up and rushed forth, like young eagles from their mountain-eyrie, to the field of strife; and not unfrequently never to return. Such had been the fate of Angus Macpherson, in consequence of an accidental rencounter with the Gordons, between whom and the Macphersons there had long subsisted a

deadly feud. The death of his father had the effect of fixing upon the mind of his son Ewan Macpherson a feeling of stern and deadly resentment against all who had ever been the foes of his turbulent clan. The stripling seemed to fret at the slow pace of time, and to long for those years in which his arm might have sufficient force to wield his father's broadsword, that he might rush to vengeance. Such had often been his secret thoughts, when he at length reached a period of life which made him able to put the suggestions of his vindictive mind into execution; but a strong and arousing spirit, to which we need not farther allude, passed over the land, and he forgot for a time his personal animosities, in feelings and purposes of a more general and absorbing nature. The powerful sympathy of thousands, lending all their united energies towards one point, and laying aside their individual pursuits, in order to contribute to the advancement of that all-engrossing aim, laid its influence upon his soul, and he joined the company, and aided in the general plans of those whom he would have joyed to have met in deadly combat. Those against whom his hostility had been less violent, he had learned to meet almost on terms of friendship, though dashed at times with looks of coldness.

Among those half-forgiven foes, was Allan Cameron, a younger son of that family of the Camerons which stood next in hereditary dignity to the chief. The feud between the Macphersons and Camerons had never been very deadly, and might, perhaps, have been forgotten, had Macpherson been less accustomed to "rake up the ashes of his fathers." Cameron, though still a very young man, had been obliged early to mingle with the world, and had acquired that habit of ready decision which gives its possessor an ascendancy over almost all with whom he has any intercourse. Notwithstanding his youth, therefore, he was of considerable influence, and being brought repeatedly into contact

with Macpherson, there was something of a shy and distant friendship between them. Cameron soon perceived the coldness of Macpherson; but, as his own generous and cultivated mind was far superior to the influence of prejudices, such as had thrown a gloom over the whole being of Macpherson, he knew not, never dreamt, that he was an object of secret dislike to him; and, with his usual frank kind-heartedness, exerted himself to win the favour of a man so distinguished for personal daring as the dark-browed lord of Glen Feracht.

During the course of the operations in which they were engaged, the decisive resolution and activity of Cameron had repeatedly attracted the notice of Macpherson. Several times had he said to himself, "Were he not a Cameron, he would be a gallant fellow!" At length, one day Macpherson was severely wounded, and rescued from immediate death by the fearless intrepidity and fiery promptness of Cameron. Macpherson's stern sullenness was subdued. Ere yet recovered from his wounds, he clasped Cameron's hand in token of cordial friendship; and so far laid aside his distant coldness, as to invite Allan Cameron to accompany him to Glen Feracht, when their present enterprise should have come to a termination.

That termination came sooner than had been expected; and Cameron found it not only convenient but prudent to accompany his fellow soldier to the secret retreat of Castle Feracht. Cameron, an ardent admirer of nature's beauties, yielded all his soul to the emotions inspired by the wild and rugged entrance to Glen Feracht; nor could he suppress repeated exclamations of delight when all the softer beauties of the quiet glen opened upon his sight. Macpherson observed his admiration, and paced over the daisied sward of his own valley with a more lofty step. Nor was there less proud satisfaction in his heart and eye as he conducted his guest to the hall of his fathers, and presented

to him his only sister, bidding her, at the same time, know in Allan Cameron the preserver of her brother's life.

Elizabeth Macpherson rose and stepped blushing forward to receive her young and gallant guest. She was just on the verge of womanhood—that most fascinating period, when the tender and deep sensibilities of the woman begin to give a timid dignity to the liveliness of the girl. The open and rather ardent expression of her happy countenance was sweetly repressed and tempered by the pure veil of maidenly modesty; yet her graceful and commanding stature, the fire of her bright blue eye, and her free and stately step and gesture, told that the spirit of her fathers dwelt strong in the bosom of their lovely daughter. The heart of Allan Cameron bounded and fluttered in his breast, as he advanced to salute this beautiful mountain-nymph. He had braved, undaunted, the brow of man when darkened with the frown of deadly hostility, but he shrank with a new and undefinable tremor before the blushing smile of a youthful maiden's cheek and eye. His self-possession seemed for once to have forsaken him; and had Macpherson been acquainted with the human heart, he must have seen that a new and irresistible feeling was rapidly taking possession of his generous preserver's bosom. He saw in it, however, but the awkwardness of a first interview between two strangers of different sexes; and, in order to relieve Cameron, led him away to see all the beautiful and romantic scenery of the glen, particularly Coir-nan-Taischatrin.

But it was not long ere the graceful person and fascinating manners of Cameron made an impression upon the artless and warm-hearted maiden. At first, her brother's intimate friend, the preserver of his life, had, in her view, just claims to her attention and grateful kindness; but she soon felt that she esteemed, not to say loved him for himself. The preserver of her brother would at all times

have been dear to her; but Allan Cameron woke in her heart a feeling inexpressibly more deep, more tender, more intense.

Art had little influence in directing the conduct of the youthful lovers; and it was not long till they experienced all that heaven of delight which arises in the heart upon being assured of the mutual return of affection. They had, however, kept their love hid from Ewan Macpherson; both because his dark and gloomy manner forbade all approaches to familiar confidence, and because, from the peculiar nature of love, mystery and concealment are necessary to give it its highest zest. Whatever might be the cause, certain it was that Allan Cameron and Elizabeth Macpherson planned the little excursions, which they now frequently made together, in such a manner that they might, as much as possible, avoid being seen by Ewan.

At length, however, the suspicions of the proud chieftain were aroused. It had never entered into his mind that Cameron might, by any possibility, raise his presumptuous hopes so high as to dream of loving the sister of Ewan Macpherson; and no sooner did he suspect the truth, than he dashed from his mind every friendly and grateful feeling towards the man who had saved his life; and saw in Allan Cameron only the hereditary foe of his clan, whose daring insolence had attempted to disgrace the name of Macpherson, by seeking to win the heart of its most loftily descended maiden. Full of resentment at what he deemed so deep an insult, he was ranging the groves and thickets of Glen Feracht in quest of Cameron, like a wolf prowling for his unconscious victim.

The evening sun was at that time throwing his long lines of slanting glory across the summits of the mountains, and lighting the clouds of the west with a radiance too dazzling to be gazed upon, yet too magnificent to permit the eye and the excited soul to wander for a moment from

the contemplation of its celestial splendour. Upon a gentle eminence, whence the castle and the greater part of the glen might be distinctly viewed, stood the lovers. They gazed with silent delight on the beauty and magnificence of the scene around them; yet, amidst their engrossing raptures, they had still enough of individual feeling remaining to be sensible of that warm palpitation of the heart, which, in the presence of a beloved object, so greatly enhances every feeling of delight. On a sudden, they were startled by a rustling noise in the adjoining thicket; and immediately forth bounded Bran, Macpherson's stag-hound, his master's constant attendant.

"My brother must be near," said Elizabeth, in an anxious whisper; "and we shall be discovered. Good Heavens! what shall we do?"

"Perhaps he may not have seen us," replied Cameron: "you can hasten to the castle, and I shall attempt to detain him here till you shall have reached it."

She gave no answer; but, casting around a glance of great alarm, and fixing one tender, anxious look for one moment upon Cameron, she hastened away through secret but well-known paths. She did not, however, escape the eye of Ewan Macpherson, who had thus unseasonably approached the lovers in their retirement. At this discovery, madness swelled in his heart and boiled along his veins; but, suppressing his passion, he approached with haughty stateliness the spot where Cameron stood, apparently fixed in deep and all-engrossing admiration of the glowing beauties of earth and heaven.

"The beauties of animated nature appear to have charms in the tasteful eyes of Allan Cameron," said Macpherson, as he advanced.

"They have," replied Cameron; "and who could stand on this lovely spot and witness so much beauty and magnificence, without feeling a glow of rapture pervade his

whole frame, and chain him to the place in delighted admiration! How happy ought the man to be who can call a place of such loveliness and grandeur his own!"

"Stay! hold! Allan Cameron; let us understand each other. Does Allan Cameron mean to say that these woods and streams of Glen Feracht, the lofty mountains around him, the tints of the evening sky over his head, and these alone, have stirred up his soul to this pitch of enthusiasm? Or must Ewan Macpherson flatter himself that his sister's charms have also had some slight influence in producing these rapturous emotions?"

Uncertain whether Macpherson was in earnest or in jest, Cameron hesitated to answer; and continued gazing on the mountain top, bright, and crimson, and airy, as if it terminated in an edge of flame.

"Dishonour blast the name of Macpherson, if I endure this!" exclaimed the fierce Ewan, bursting into a tumult of fury. "Proud Cameron! dost thou disdain to answer the chief of the Macphersons? Are we fallen so low that a Cameron shall despise us? Speak! answer me! else I strike thee to my foot like a base hound! Hast thou dared to mention love—even to think of love for the sister of Macpherson?"

"And where were the mighty offence, though a Cameron should aspire so high as to love the sister of Macpherson?"

"Where were the offence?—I tell thee, boy, he had better never have seen the light. But I will not trifle with thee. Hast *thou* so dared?"

"I am little used to answer such interrogations. But I would not willingly quarrel with Ewan Macpherson. My heart must have been colder than it is, could I have enjoyed the company of Elizabeth Macpherson without yielding me to that influence of witching beauty which softens and subdues the soul."

"Thou hast not said—thou dost not dare to say—thou

lovest her! Cameron, I have felt friendship for thee. Thou hast resided in the hall of my fathers. My hand is withheld from thee. But, if thou dost not renounce, at once and for ever, all pretensions to the love of Elizabeth Macpherson, thou hast looked thy last on this green earth and those glorious heavens."

"Renounce all pretensions to the love of Elizabeth Macpherson! I tell thee, proud man, that the daughter of the highest Macpherson might think herself honoured by an alliance with a Cameron."

"Insolent serf! unsay thy words, or maintain them with thy sword!—Crouch, like a low-born slave as thou art, and beg Macpherson's pardon, if thou darest not bare thy coward blade."

"Macpherson, thou didst not call me slave or coward, when, side by side, we two stemmed the stream of battle in its wildest rage;—nor was it a coward blade that hewed out a safe retreat for thee, when thine own arm waxed weak and thy steps were unequal on the field of the slain."

"Thou dost well to speak of what thou knowest will prevent me from chastising thy base treachery. 'Tis what I might have expected;—'tis done like a cowardly Cameron!"

"But that thou hast a sister, Macpherson, that taunt had cost thee dear. Thou knowest that thou speakest falsely."

"Falsely!—defend thee, villain, or die like a slave! The feud of our fathers is but renewed—their spirits behold our strife!" cried Macpherson, and, drawing his claymore, rushed upon Cameron almost before his blade was bared for the combat.

Macpherson, transported to a pitch of frenzy, thought not of artful skill, dreamt not of personal danger. He showered blow on blow with the intemperate fury of a

maniac; all his aim, every effort, being directed to destroy his foe. Cameron, with less bodily strength, was possessed of calm and dauntless courage, superior skill in the use of his weapon, and unmatched personal activity. Unwilling to harm the brother of the object of his affection, he only defended himself, retiring and warding off the furious but aimless blows of Macpherson. The frowning cheek and brow of the baffled chief waxed grimmer with disappointed hate; and, changing his mode of attack, he swept circling round his young and agile antagonist, endeavouring thus to throw him off his guard. Cameron, turning dexterously on his heel, held him still at the sword's point, and allowed him to expend his strength in desperate efforts of fierce but ineffectual violence. During their combat, however, some of Macpherson's *gillies* approached the spot; and Cameron perceived them nearing him with kindling eyes, and holding in their impatient hands the *skean dhu* half unsheathed. He knew that Macpherson was as honourable as brave; and he knew that he might with perfect safety trust his life to the honour of any highlander, under any circumstance where the peculiar honour of his clan was not concerned. But he also knew that no clansman would esteem any deed a crime which should preserve the life or the reputation of his chief. There was, he saw, but one means of saving his life. Collecting all his strength, he beat aside one of Macpherson's furious blows, and bounding upon him as a crouching tiger springs upon his prey, he wrenched his claymore from his hand, dashed him to the earth with the mere violence of the assault; wielding a weapon in either hand, he struck to the ground two of the opposing clansmen, plunged into the thickets as a mountain stag bursts through his covert when the opening pack is near, and disappeared in an instant among the crashing and closing boughs of the underwood. Foaming with disappointed rage, Macpherson sprung from the ground,

snatched a *skean dhu* from one of his prostrated followers, and shouting, "Revenge!" rushed into the thickets in headlong pursuit. In vain. A fleeter foot than that of Allan Cameron never pressed the mountain heath, and, in a short time, he was far beyond all danger from his enraged pursuer; who, after ranging every dell and nook in vain, returned to Castle Feracht, chafing and foaming with impotent rage, and uttering dire but unavailing threats of vengeance.

What would it avail to relate the chieftain's wrath, when he found himself compelled to forego his hopes of sweet revenge, and to endure what he esteemed a new and a more daring insult? Fret and chafe as he might, he knew that his high-souled sister would not be deterred, by threats of personal injury, from following the bent of her own inclination. He therefore assembled his followers in her presence, and caused them all to bind themselves, by a deep oath, to avenge the quarrel of their chief upon Allan Cameron, should he ever dare to set foot within Glen Feracht; enforcing his commands by threats of deadliest vengeance, should any clansman show him favour, hold intelligence with him, or meet him in terms of peace. Elizabeth Macpherson saw his purpose; but she scorned to display her emotion. A flush indeed mantled her brow, and her eye shed one sparkle of indignation—but she remained silent. Fraternal affection was banished the halls of Castle Feracht. An increasing gloom and moodiness of heart began to sink upon the rugged chief; and, at length, to prevent his dark soul's loneliness from becoming altogether insupportable, he began to take an interest in the affairs, first of his own clan, next of the neighbouring clans, and finally of the nation. He thus became acquainted with many a wild and many a wondrous legend, which might otherwise never have reached his observation; and his rather uncultivated mind was not able to resist the encroachments of supersti-

tion. Among others, a firm belief in the reality of the *taisch*, or second-sight, took possession of his mind; and he listened to the many almost incredible relations concerning it, with a wild excitement of spirit. These changes in the manners and pursuits of Macpherson, were, from time to time, reported to Allan Cameron, in spite of the stern threats which had been denounced against all who should hold intercourse with him. A youth, the cho-alt (foster-brother) of Allan Cameron, had repeatedly, under the assumed character of a wandering hunter, entered within the precincts of Glen Feracht, where he was unknown; and, picking up all the information that could be obtained, without awakening suspicion, returned with it to his youthful chief.

Ewan Macpherson was one day informed, by his aged *henchman*, Ranald Glas, that a second-sighted man had arrived in the glen, conducted, according to his own account, by the power of the taisch: that he was extremely old, and his visions were appallingly vivid: his thoughts were terror, and his words were fire. The revelations of things to come passed frequent and powerful across his soul, bright and living as realities; and his language was that of one who constantly held strange communication with scenes and beings not of this world. Though his foot had never before trod the heath of Glen Feracht, he described, with the most perfect accuracy, its castle, stream, and cave; saying that he was come to lay his bones beside those of the ancient seers and holy men who had inhabited Coirnan-Taischatrin. This was enough to rouse the curiosity of Macpherson. Pursuing his inquiries, he learned that the seer had taken up his abode in the cave, and that he had already foretold to some of the clan things, part of which were accomplished, and the rest expected with the utmost confidence. In order to satisfy his curiosity, Macpherson determined to visit the

hoary seer, and learn from himself the nature of his visions.

The shadows of the pine and oak were stretching far across the ravine in the slant evening sunshine, when Ewan Macpherson appeared in front of the cave. His eye could not penetrate the deep darkness within it; and, yielding to a feeling of indescribable awe which crept over his soul, he remained for some time silent and motionless before its entrance. At length he ordered one of his gillies to acquaint the wondrous inmate that Ewan Macpherson wished to hold some converse with him. Forward came the venerable man; and his appearance, in the dimming twilight, had no tendency to diminish the strange delirium of superstitious feelings which had absorbed the whole mind of the bewildered chief. The sage bent one searching glance upon his visitor; and, seeming to have penetrated the state of his mind, advanced into more open view.

A long and squared rod seemed to support his shaking frame as he came forward, tottering and halting at every step. The shaggy hide of an enormous wolf, thrown loosely over his shoulders, served partly to clothe him, partly to disguise his form by the air of savage wildness which a garment so uncouth gave its wearer. From his belt depended some instruments, with the use of which Macpherson was entirely unacquainted; together with a *skean dhu* of exquisite and uncommon workmanship. His bonnet alone was like that of other men; for what could a true highlander substitute for the blue bonnet? but he neither doffed it, nor made any motions of obeisance as he approached. A long white beard flowed half down his bosom, waving heavily and solemnly as he moved. The fire of an intensely bright eye was half hid by his deep, grey, shaggy eyebrows; yet, from beneath that grim penthouse, they emitted occasional sparklings like diamonds in the dark.

"Chief of Macpherson!" said he, in a deep hollow voice,

"man of the dark brow and ruthless hand! what seekest thou with Moran of the Wild?" But, ere Macpherson could reply, the sage cast the wolf hide back from his right shoulder—extended the long square rod in his firmly clenched hand—raised himself up to his full height, while his eyes seemed starting from their sockets, and gleaming like two balls of living fire, and his whole frame agitated, and as if it were dilating with the internal workings of his wild visionary spirit. Macpherson shook and shrunk in his presence.

"They come! they come!" exclaimed the seer—"the wild, the dreadful, the undefinable, the unutterable, the shadowy forms and seemings of things and actions to be! They crowd upon me in powers and numbers unendurable, inconceivable! Words never formed by human breath sound within my heart, and tell of things that mortal tongue may never utter. Eyes, clear, cold, dead, bright, and chill as winter moonshine, look into my soul, and fill it with all their lucid meanings! Oh, scene of blood and woe! when wilt thou end? Thou bright-haired angel, must the doom be thine! Fair lady of the stately brow! oh! let me see no more!" His lips quivered, but he uttered not another word. He remained fixed, rigid, statue-like, as if chilled into stone, bereft of life and motion, by the terrible vision. At length his extended arm dropped by his side; and, heaving a long, shuddering sigh, he leaned his drooping frame upon his rod, trembling and exhausted.

After a considerable pause, Macpherson ventured to address him, with the intention of inquiring into the nature of his vision. "Speak not to me, Ewan Macpherson," said he. "Seek not to know the fate thou wilt and must know all too soon. Thy path through life has been blood-stained and devious. No warnings may now avail thee. But that lady—might she be rescued from misery and horror! Chief! if the safety and happiness of thy father's daughter

be dear to thee, bid her assume the spirit of her race, and come alone to Coir-nan-Taischatrin. Tell her that Moran of the Wild has that to reveal to her which concerns her, and thee, too, deeply. And mark me, Chief! unless thou ceasest to pursue the feuds of thy fathers, thy course will be brief, and bloody will be its close." Thus saying, he turned and feebly dragged his spent and tottering form into the dark and awe-inspiring cave.

Stunned and bewildered, incapable of thought or reflection, and staggering like one who walks in his sleep, Macpherson wandered back towards Castle Feracht. With a strange expression of vague astonishment and hesitation he gazed upon his sister. At length he found words: "Elizabeth Macpherson, if the honour of thy name, if thy own safety and happiness can move thee; if thy brother's life—but that is a trifle—assume the spirit of thy fathers, and go alone to Coir-nan-Taischatrin. Moran of the Wild has that to tell thee which deeply concerns thy safety and happiness. Canst thou execute his desire? He is a fearful man!" At his first words the blood forsook her cheek, and her heart sank within her; but, ere he ceased speaking, a wild surmise flashed gleaming across her soul.

"Brother!" replied she, "the daughter of Angus Macpherson dare go alone to Coir-nan-Taischatrin, and hear whatever the sage may have to tell. Fear not for me. Do not, by impatience or needless anxiety for my safety, rashly interrupt our interview. Ere long, you shall know what warnings or what information the seer has to impart." Then, with a stately and determined step, and an eye kindled with an ambiguous expression of ardent hope or daring resolution, she bent her way to the dreaded cave.

The fearless maiden approached the cave. She spoke; but the voice that answered was that of Allan Cameron. The wolf's hide was soon thrown aside, and he stood before her in the graceful garb of a mountain warrior; his noble

countenance beaming with courage and triumphant love. Taking advantage of the time which Macpherson would delay at the castle, awaiting the expiration of their interview, they hastily fled from the hostile glen, and soon reached a concealment where the faithful cho-alt had horses prepared for their escape. Words would be feeble to express the fury of Ewan Macpherson when, after waiting till his patience was exhausted, he explored the cave, and found that he had been deceived, and that by the man whom he had begun to consider as his deadliest foe. He determined to take fearful vengeance upon Cameron, and all of his clan whom he might be able to overpower. Before he could get his purpose put in execution, he chanced to meet a small party of the Gordons; when, forgetting every other thought but that of his burning desire of vengeance on those who slew his father, he rushed upon them; and, bursting into the midst of them, was assailed on all sides, and wounded so severely that, though he was rescued by his own followers, and was completely victorious, he died ere he could be brought back to Castle Feracht. Dying unmarried, his estate and power passed to his sister, and from her to one of her younger sons, upon his dropping the name of Cameron, and retaining that of Macpherson alone. An amicable termination was thus put to the feud between the two families. A descendant from this auspicious union still resides in Castle Feracht, and occasionally relates, with considerable pleasure, the tradition of Coir-nan-Taischatrin.

THE LAIDLEY WORM OF SPINDLESTON HEUGH.

A TALE OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

"Word went east, and word went west,
And word is gone over the sea,
That a Laidley Worm in Spindleston Heugh
Would ruin the north countrie.

"All folks believe within the shire
This story to be true,
And they all run to Spindleston
The cave and trough to view.

"This fact now Duncan Frazier,
Of Cheviot, sings in rhyme,
Lest Bamboroughshire-men should forget
Some part of it in time."—*Ancient Ballad.**

"TELL me, old man," said a Northumbrian chief to a Saxon bard who claimed his hospitality, "tell me a tale of the olden time—a legend of the race of Woden."

The bard bowed his head and began:—Great was Ida, the flame-bearer, above all the kings of the isles. His ships covered the sea in shoals, and his warriors that launched them on the deep were stronger than its waves. He built the towers of Bamborough on the mighty rock whose shadow darkens the waters. He reared it as a habi-

* The popular Ballad of the Laidley (or loathly) Worm of Spindleston Heugh, was composed by Duncan Frazier, the Cheviot bard, more than five hundred years ago, and had rendered the legend familiar far beyond the Borders. The tradition has doubtless been commemorated by the ancient Saxon bards, when old Duncan turned it into rhyme; and it is under this supposition that the present tale is told, the narrator being understood to be a wandering bard of the Saxon race.

tation for his queen, and he called it by her name.* Wheresoever he went, strong places were consumed, kings were overthrown and became his servants, and nations became one. But Ida, in the midst of his conquests, fell in battle, by the red sword of Owen, the avenging Briton. Then followed six kings who reigned over Bernicia, from the southern Tyne even to the Frith of Dun Edin. But the duration of their sovereignty was as a summer cloud or morning dew. Their reigns were as six spans from an infant's hand, and peaceful as an infant's slumber.

But to them succeeded Ethelfrith the Fierce—the grandson of Ida—the descendant of the immortal Woden. His voice, when his ire was kindled, was like the sound of deep thunder, and his vengeance fleeter than the lightning. He overthrew princes as reeds, and he swept armies before him as stubble. His conquests extended from where clouds sleep on the brow of Cheviot, to where the heights of terrific Snowdon pierce heaven. Men trembled at his name; for he was as a wolf in the fold, as an eagle among the lesser birds of heaven.

Now, the wife of Ethelfrith's bosom died; she departed to the place of spirits—to the company of her fathers. She left behind her a daughter, Agitha,† with the tresses of the raven's wing; and she was beautiful as sunbeams sparkling from morning dew amongst the flowers of spring. Her eyes were bright as the falcon's, but with their brightness was mingled the meekness of the dove's. The breath of sixteen summers had fanned her cheeks. Her bosom was white as the snow that lay in winter on the hills, and soft as the plumage of the sea-fowl that soared over the rocks of her lofty dwelling.

A hundred princes sighed for the hand of the bright-

* According to the venerable Bede, the name of Ida's queen was Bidda, and the original name of Bamborough, Biddaburgh.

† In the old ballad she is called Margaret.

haired Agitha; but their tales of love had no music for her ear, and they jarred upon her soul as the sounds of a broken instrument. She bent her ear only to listen to the song of affection from the lips of the Chylde Wynde—even to Chylde Wynde of the sharp sword and the unerring bow, who was her own kinsman, the son of her father's brother. His voice was to her as the music of water brooks to the weary and fainting traveller—dear as the shout of triumph to a conquering king. Great was the Chylde Wynde among the heroes of Bernicia. He had honoured the shield of his father. He had rendered his sword terrible. Where the battle raged fiercest, there was his voice heard, there was his sword seen; war-horses and their riders fell before it—it arrested the fury of the chariots of war. Bards recorded his deeds in immortal strains, and Agitha sang them in secret.

Yet would not Ethelfrith listen to the prayer of his kinsman, but his anger was kindled against him. The fierce king loved his daughter, but he loved dominion more. It was dearer to him than the light of heaven, than the face of the blessed sun. He waded through blood as water, even the blood of his victims, to set his feet upon thrones. He said unto himself—"Agitha is beautiful—she is fairer than her mother was. She is stately as a pine, lifting its head above the sacred oaks. She is lovely as the moon when it blesseth the harvest fields. A king only shall possess her hand, and give a kingdom in exchange for it."

Thus spoke her father, the mighty Ethelfrith, whose word was power, and whose purpose was fixed as the everlasting rocks on which the foundations of the earth are built. He said, therefore, unto the Chylde Wynde—"Strong art thou in battle, son of my brother; the mighty bend before thy spear, and thy javelins pierce through the shields of our enemies. As an eagle descendeth on its prey, so rusheth my kinsman to the onset. But thou hast

no nation to serve thee—no throne to offer for my daughter's hand. Whoso calleth himself her husband, shall for that title exchange the name of king, and become tributary unto me—even as my sword, before which thrones shake and nations tremble, has caused others to do homage. Go, therefore, son of my brother, take with thee ships and warriors, and seek thee a people to conquer. Go, find a land to possess; and when with thy sword and with thy bow thou hast done this, return ye to me, bringing a crown in thy left hand, and in thy right will I place the hand of Agitha with the bright hair, whose eyes are as stars."

"O king!" answered the Chylde—"thou who holdest the fate of princes in thy hands, and the shadow of whose sceptre stretcheth over many nations—the uplifting of whose arm turneth the tide of battle—swear unto me, by the spirit of mighty Woden, that while I am doing that which thou requirest, and ere I can return to lay a crown at thy feet, swear that thou will not bless another king, for an offered kingdom, with the hand of Agitha, in whom my soul liveth!"

Then did the wrath of the king wax terrible; his eyes were as consuming fires, even as the fire of heaven when it darteth from the dark clouds of midnight. His countenance was fierce as the sea, when its waves boil and are lifted up with the tempest. In his wrath he dashed his heel upon the floor; and the armour of conquered kings, the spoils of a hundred battles, rang round the halls of Ida.

"Shall the blood of my brother," he cried "stain the floor of his father? Boy! ask ye an oath from a king, the descendant of Woden?* Away! do as I command thee, lest ye perish!"

* It may be necessary to mention, that the imaginary deities of the Saxons were named Woden, Tuisco, Thor, Frea, and Seator. They also worshipped the sun and moon. Woden was their god of war; and from him Ida and his descend-

Then did the Chylde Wynde withdraw from before the anger of the great king, in the presence of whom, in his wrath, the life even of his kindred was as a spider's thread. He sought Agitha with the rainbow smile, where she sat with her maidens, in the groves of Budle, ornamenting a robe of skins for her father, the mighty Ethelfrith. The sea sang its anthem of power along the shore, and the caves of the rocks resounded with the chorus of the eternal hymn. The farthest branches of the grove bent over the cliff that overhung the sounding sea. The birds of heaven sang over her head, and before her the sea-birds wheeled in myriads, countless as the sand upon the shore, like burnished clouds over the adjacent isles. Their bright wings flashed in the sun, like the fitful fires that light the northern heavens.

The warrior Chylde drew near where the princess sat. There was gloom and sorrow on his brow. The echoes of the grove answered to his sighs. Agitha heard them. She beheld the cloud of anguish that was before his countenance. The robe of skins dropped from her hand. Her eyes, that were as the morning light, became dim. She arose and went forward to meet him.

"Wherefore," she inquired, "does my hero sigh, and why sits heaviness on the brightness of his face? Art not thou renowned in song as the warrior of the dauntless heart and the resistless sword? Art not thou the envy of princes—the beloved of the people—the admired by the daughters of kings? And can sadness dwell upon thy soul? Oh! thou who art as the plume of my father's warriors, and as the pride of his host, if grief hath entered into thy bosom, let it be buried in mine."

Then thus replied the warrior Chylde:—"Agitha—thou

ants professed to spring. We need hardly add that it is after these objects of pagan worship that we still name the days of the week; as Woden's day (Wednesday), Thor's day (Thursday), Frea's day (Friday), &c. &c.

that art fairer, milder than the light that plays around the brows of the summer moon, and dearer to me than a mother's milk to the lips of her babe—it is for thee that my countenance is sad, and my soul troubled. For thy father has pierced my spirit with many arrows; yea, even with the poisoned arrows of a deadly foe. He hath wrung my soul for thee, Agitha. Thou didst give me thy heart when the sacred moon rose over the rocky Ferns and beheld us; and while the ministering spirits that dwell in its beams descended as a shower of burning gold upon the sea, and, stretching to the shore, heard us. We exchanged our vows beneath the light of the hallowed orb, while the stars of heaven hid their faces before it. Then, Agitha, while its beams glowed on my father's sword, upon that sword I swore to love thee. But our vows are vain. Daughter of kings! our love is sorrow. Thy father hath vowed, by the mighty Woden, that thou shalt be the wife of a king, and that a kingdom shall be the price of thy hand. Yet will I gather my warriors together. They number a thousand spears; they have a thousand bows. The charge of their spears is as the rushing of the whirlwind. The flight of their arrows hides the face of the sun. Foes perish at their approach. Victory goeth before their face. Therefore will I go forth into a far country. I will make war upon a strange people, that I may take the kingdom from their ruler, and present his crown unto thy father for the hand of my Agitha."

The maiden wept. Her head sank on her bosom like a fair flower weighed down with dew. Tears stood in the eyes of the warrior.

"Weep not, daughter of heroes!" he said; "the tide of battle is in the hands of Woden. He will not turn it against a descendant of his race. I will return to thee in triumph. I will throw a crown at thy father's feet, and rush to the arms of Agitha. Thou wilt greet me again with thy smile

of love—with thy voice that is sweeter than the music of spring. Thy heart, which is dearer than life, shall be my kingdom; and thy bosom, that is whiter than the breast of the wild swan, my throne. I will fly to thee as the hunted deer to its covert—as a bird to its nest where its young await it."

Thus departed the warrior, and Agitha returned to her maidens; she sat down amongst them and mourned.

Gormack, the weird, a thane of the Pictish race, had his dwelling near the giddy cliffs where the young eagles scream to the roar of the dark waters of the Forth. He had a daughter whose beauty was the theme of all tongues. Her fame went over the land like the sound of shells—yea, like the sound of shells when the wind is hushed, and the moon is bright in the heavens. Fair was the daughter of Gormack as the lily that groweth by the brook. Her hair was as the finest fleece when it is purified. It fell down her back in ringlets. It was bright as the golden clouds that encircle the throne of the rising sun—as the golden clouds when they are dipped in silver. Her father held counsel with spirits of evil. They were obedient to his will. He invoked them to endue his daughter with more than mortal beauty, that she might inflame the soul of princes, and sit upon their throne. Such was the tale of men. Her beauty was the burden of the song of bards. In their chorus to swell the praise of others, they said that they were "lovely as the fair daughter of Gormack."

The tale of her charms was heard by Ethelfrith. It was heard by the fierce in war—the impetuous in love—the victor in battle—yea, even by Ethelfrith, king of Bernicia. "I will see the fair daughter of the thane," said the proud king, to whose will even war and the mighty in war did homage. Moreover, Gormack the thane was his vassal. He had sworn to his obedience.

The king went forth to the dwelling of Gormack, among

the cliffs. Ealdormen,* comites,† and thanes,‡ attended him. The weird thane came forth to meet him; he bowed hi head and made obeisance.

Ethelfrith beheld Bethoc the Beautiful; and the songs th t he had heard in her praise were as an idle tale, for her loveliness exceeded the power of song. The soul of the fierce king melted within him. It was subdued by the sorcery of her charms.

"Give me," said he unto her father—and commandments ever fell from his lips—"give me Bethoc to be my wife; for she is more lovely than the morning star. She is fit for a warrior's bride; she shall be THE LADY§ of Bernicia."

Again the weird bowed his head. He knelt upon his knee. He presented his daughter to the king. Then did Ethelfrith take her by the hand. He led her forth to his chariot of war, through the midst of his ealdormen, his comites, and his thanes, who were in great power and resistless in war, and they made obeisance to her as she passed through the midst of them. They saluted her as their queen. Her breast swelled with exultation. Pride flashed from her eyes, as the sun bursting from a cloud dazzleth the eye of the gazer. The king gazed upon her beauty as a dreamer upon a fair vision.

Now, the beauty of Bethoc was sin made lovely. Her bosom was as a hill where the vine and the cedar grew, and where flowers shed forth perfume; but beneath which a volcano slept. To the eye was beauty, beyond were desolation and death. Pride, hatred, and envy, encircled her soul. She was sold unto evil, even as her father was. The spirit of destruction, in answer to her father's prayer, had formed

* Earls. † Companions.

‡ Thanes signified men high in power, of various degrees of rank.

§ THE LADY was the appellation given to a queen amongst the Anglo-Saxons.

her a beautiful destroyer. Whatsoever was lovely that she looked upon in envy, withered as though an east wind passed over it—the destroying wind which blighteth the hopes of the husbandman.

At the going down of the sun, the king, and his fair queen, Bethoc, with his mighty men, drew near to the tower which Ida had built on the mountain-rock, and all the people of the city came forth to meet him, and to greet their queen.

The bards lifted up their voice; they styled her the fairest of women.

"Fair is the wife of the king," replied an aged thane, "but fairer is Agitha, his daughter! Bethoc, the queen, is a bright star, but Agitha is the star of the morning—fairest of the heavens!"

Queen Bethoc heard the words of the aged thane, and she hated Agitha because of them. The spirit of evil spread his darkness over her soul. He filled her breast with the poison of asps, her eyes with the venom of the adder that lures to destruction.

At the entrance of the tower of kings stood Agitha, lovely as the spirits that dwell among the stars, and give beauty to the beings of earth. She knelt before the queen. She offered her a daughter's homage.

"Rise, beautiful one! inspirer of song!" said the queen; "kneel not to me, for I am but a star—thou art the star of the morning. Hide not thy face from before men. Let them serve and worship thee."

Cold were her words as water which droppeth from the everlasting icicles in the caves of the north. As is the mercy of the tears of the crocodile, so was the kindness of her looks. Envy and hatred gleamed in her eyes, like lightnings round the sides of a dark cloud.

The countenance of Agitha fell; for she knew that her father in his wrath was fiercer than the wild boar of the

forest when at bay; and she feared to reply to the sneer of the wife in whom his eyes delighted.

Queen Bethoc, the daughter of Gormack, knew that men said she was less beautiful than Agitha, the daughter of the king. When they walked by the clear fountains or the crystal brooks together, the fountains and the brooks whispered to her the words which men spoke—"Agitha is the most lovely." Therefore did the queen hate Agitha with a great and deadly hatred. As the sleuth-hound seeketh its prey, so did she seek her destruction. As the fowler lureth the bird into his net, so did she lie in wait for her. Yet she feared to destroy her openly, because that she was afraid of the fierce anger of her husband Ethelfrith, and his love for his daughter was great.

Sleep fled from her eyes, and colour forsook her cheeks, because of her envy of the beauty of Agitha, and the hatred which she bore her. She spoke unto her father Gormack, the weird thane, that he would aid her with his sorceries against her. Then did they practise their unclean spells, and perform their dark incantations to destroy her; but their spells and incantations prevailed not, for the spirit of Woden protected Agitha.

Now, there resided at that time in a dark cave, in the heugh which is called Spindleston, an enchantress of great power, named Elgiva—the worker of wonders. Men said that she could weave ropes of sand, and threads from the motes of the sunbeams. She could call down fire from the clouds, and transform all things by the waving of her magic wand. Around her hung a loose robe, composed of the skins of many beasts. Her feet and her arms were bare, and they were painted with strange figures. On her face, also, was the likeness of the spirits that ministered to her will. She was fearful to look upon. Men fled at her approach. The beasts of the field were scared by her shadow. Round her head was wreathed a crown of fantastic hemlock

—round her neck a corslet of deadly nightshade. On her left arm coiled a living snake, and it rested its head upon her bosom. In her right hand she held a wand dipped in the poison of all things venomous. Whatsoever it touched died—whatsoever it waved over was transformed. No human foot approached her cave—no mortal dared. The warrior, who feared not a hundred foes, quailed at the sight of Elgiva, the enchantress, the worker of wonders. Unclean reptiles crawled around her cave—the asp, the loathsome toad, and the hissing adder. Two owls sat in the farthest corner of the cave, and their eyes were as lamps in its darkness. They sat upon skulls of the dead. A tame raven croaked in the midst of it. It was told that the reptiles, the owls, and the raven, were objects of her enchantment—warriors, and the daughters of warriors, transformed by the waving of her wand.

Now, when Bethoc could find no rest because of the greatness of her hatred for Agitha, and, moreover, as she herself had communed with impure spirits, she overcame the terror which the name of Elgiva spread. She sought her aid. In the dead of night, when the moon had gone to rest, yea, when clouds and darkness had blotted out the stars that were left to watch in the heavens, she went forth from the tower of kings. She stood before the cave of the enchantress. She lifted up her voice and cried—"Elgiva—worker of wonders! the feared of mortals—come forth!"

The owls clapped their wings and screamed; the ravens croaked, and the adders hissed. From the darkness of her cave the voice of the enchantress came forth—it came forth as a voice from the grave, saying—"Who amongst the children of mortals dareth to call upon the name of Elgiva?—or, what deed of sin bringeth thee hither?"

"The queen," answered Bethoc, "the wife of the mighty Ethelfrith, she calleth thee, she invoketh thine aid. The

strongest spirits obey thee—the spirits of the earth, of the air, and of the sea. Then help me, thou that art more powerful than the kings of the earth, that art stronger than the fate of the stars; help—rid me of mine enemy whom I hate, even of Agitha, the daughter of the king. Make her as one of the poisoned worms that crawl within thy cave. Or, if thou wilt not do this thing to serve me, when my right hand hath shed her blood, turn from me the fierce wrath of her father the king."

Again the voice of the enchantress came forth from the cave, saying—"In seven days come unto me again—bring with thee the Princess Agitha; and Elgiva, the enchantress, will do towards her as Bethoc, the daughter of the weird thane, hath requested."

Thus did the queen, while Ethelfrith, her lord, was making war against a strange king in a far country.

Darkness lay heavy on the hills, it concealed the objects on the plains. The seven days, of which the enchantress had spoken, were expired.

"Maiden," said the queen unto Agitha, "rise and follow me."

Agitha obeyed; for the fear and the commandment of her father were upon her. Two servants, men of the Pictish race, also followed the queen. She went towards the cave of the enchantress. Agitha would have shrunk back, but the queen grasped her hand. The swords of the men of the Pictish race waved over her. They dragged her forward. They stood before the cave of the potent Elgiva.

"Elgiva! worker of wonders!" exclaimed the queen; "Bethoc, thy servant, is come. The victim also is here—Agitha, the morning-star. By thy power, which is stronger than the lightning, and invisible as the wind, render loathsome her beauty; yea, make her as a vile worm which crawleth on the ground, with venom in its mouth."

Again was heard the deep voice of the enchantress, mingled with the croaking of the raven, and the screeching of the owls, as she rushed from her cave, crying—"It shall be as thou hast said."

Terror had entranced the soul of the fair Agitha—it had brought a sleep over her senses. The enchantress grasped her hand. She threw her arm around her.

"Away, accursed!" she exclaimed unto Bethoc the queen; "fly! lest the power of the enchantment fall upon thee also. Fly! lest it overtake thee as darkness overtaketh the benighted traveller. Fly! ere the wand of the worker of wonders is uplifted, and destruction come upon thee."

The followers of Bethoc quaked with dismay. They turned with her and fled to the tower of Ida. Of their outgoing and their incoming none knew.

The maidens of Bernicia wept when the loss of Agitha was known. "Beauty," said they, "hath perished. Agitha, whose face was as the face of heaven when its glories appear—as the face of the earth when its flowers give forth their fragrance—Agitha is not!" And because she was not, the people mourned. Queen Bethoc alone rejoiced, and was silent.

Dismay and wonder spread over the land—for a tale was told of a serpent-worm, fearful in magnitude and of monstrous form, which was seen at Spindleston, by the cave of Elgiva—the worker of wonders—the woman of power.

The people trembled. They said of the monster—"It is Agitha, the beloved!—the daughter of our king, of conquering Ethelfrith. Elgiva, the daughter of destruction, who communeth with the spirits of the air, and defeateth armies by the waving of her wand, hath done this. She hath cast her enchantments over Agitha, the fairest of women—the meekest among the daughters of princes."

The bards raised songs of lamentation for her fate.

"Surely," said they, "when the Chylde Wynde cometh, his sword, which maketh the brave to fall and bringeth down the mighty, will break the enchantment." And the burden of the songs was—"Return, O valiant Chylde, conqueror of nations—thou who makest kings captives, return! Free the enchanted! Deliver the beautiful!"

Now, the people of the land where the Chylde and his warriors landed, were stricken with terror at their approach. They fled before them, as sheep fly upon the hills when the howl of the hungry wolf is heard. He overthrew their king, he took possession of his kingdom. He took his crown, and he brought it to Ethelfrith, whose ambition was boundless as the sea. He brought it as the price of Agitha's hand.

It was morn. The sun rose with his robes of glory over the sea. Bethoc, the daughter of Gormack the weird, stood upon the turrets of Ida's tower. She was performing incantations to the four winds of heaven. She called upon them to lift up the sea on their invisible wings, to raise its waves as mountains, and whelm the ships upon its bosom. But the winds obeyed not her voice, and the sea was still. In the bay of Budle lay the vessels of the Chylde Wynde, and the weapons of his warriors flashed in the sunbeams and upon the sea. Therefore was the spirit of Queen Bethoc troubled. It was troubled lest the enchantment should be broken—Agitha delivered from the spell, and her wrongs avenged.

As a great wave rolleth in majesty to the shore, so advanced the warrior ships of Chylde Wynde, the subduer of heroes. The people came forth to meet him with a shout of joy. "He is come," they cried; "the favoured of the stars, the Chylde of the sharp sword, is come to deliver Agitha the beautiful, to break the spell of her enchantment."

He heard the dark tale. His bosom heaved. He rent

the robe that covered him. His grief was as the howling of the winter wind, in a deep glen between great mountains. He threw himself upon the earth and wept.

But again the spirit of Woden came upon him. It burned within his bosom as a fierce flame. He started to his feet. To his lips he pressed the sword of his father. He vowed to break the enchantment that entombed his betrothed.

He rushed towards the cave of Elgiva, the worker of wonders. His warriors feared to follow him. The people stood back in dismay. For by the waving of Elgiva's wand she turned the swords of warriors upon themselves; she caused them to melt in their hands.

At the mouth of her cave stood the enchantress. By her side lay the serpent-worm.

"Daughter of wickedness!" shouted the Chylde, "break thy accursed spell; restore the fair form of my Agitha, else the blood of thy heart shall dissolve the charm."

"Hearken, O Chylde," cried the enchantress; "thou subduer of kings, thou vanquisher of the strong—sharp is thy sword, but against me it hath no power. Would it pierce the breast that suckled thee?—the breast of her that bore thee?"

From the hand of the warrior dropped his uplifted sword.

"Mother!" he exclaimed. He fell on his knees before her.

"Yea, thy mother," answered the enchantress; "who, when her warrior husband fell, fled to the desert, to the cave, and to the forest, for protection—even for protection from the love and from the wrath of Ethelfrith the fierce, the brother of thy warrior father, whose eyes were as the eagle's, and his arm great of strength. Uncouth is the habit, wild is the figure, and idle the art of thy mother. Broken is her wand which the vulgar feared. That mine

eyes might behold my son, this cave became my abode. Superstition walled it round with fire."

"And Agitha?" gasped the warrior.

"Behold!" answered she, "the loathly worm at the feet of thy mother."

The skins of fish of the deep sea were sewed together with cords—they were fashioned into the form of a great serpent.

"Come forth, my daughter!" cried the enchantress. Agitha sprang from her disguise of skins. She sank on the breast of her hero.

The people beheld her from afar. Their shout of joy rang across the sea. It was echoed among the hills. A scream rose from the tower of Ida. From the highest turret Bethoc the queen had sprung. In pieces was her body scattered at the foot of the great cliff. They were gathered together—they were buried in the cave of Elgiva. From her grave crawled an unclean beast, and it crawleth around it for ever.

Ethelfrith died in battle. Woden shut his eyes and saw him not, and he fell. And Elgiva, the enchantress, the worker of wonders, was hailed as Rowena, the mother of Wynde, the subduer of princes; yea, even of Chylde Wynde, the beloved, and the lord of Agitha the Beautiful.

Such was the tale of the Saxon bard.

THE SABBATH WRECKS.

A LEGEND OF DUNBAR.

It was a beautiful Sabbath morning in the autumn of 1577: a few small clouds, tinged with red, sailed slowly through the blue heavens; the sun shone brightly, as if conscious of the glory and goodness of its Maker, diffusing around a holy stillness and tranquillity, characteristic of the day of rest; the majestic Frith flashed back the sunbeams, while, on its bosom, slowly glided the winged granaries of commerce; there, too, lay its islands, glorying in their strength—the May, shrouded in light, appeared as a leviathan sunning in its rays—and the giant Bass, covered with seafowl, rose as a proud mountain of alabaster in the midst of the waters. A thousand boats lay along the shores of Dunbar. It was the herring season—and there were many boats from the south and from the north, and also from the coast of Holland.

Now, tidings were brought to the fishermen that an immense shoal was upon the coast; and, regardless of its being Sabbath morning, they began to prepare their thousand boats, and to go out to set their nets. The Rev. Andrew Simpson, a man possessed of the piety and boldness of an apostle, was then minister of Dunbar; and, as he went forth to the kirk to preach to his people, he beheld the unhallowed preparations of the fishermen on the beach; and he turned and went amongst them, and reproved them sternly for their great wickedness. But the men were obdurate—the prospect of great gain was before them, and they mocked the words of the preacher. Yea, some of them said unto him, in the words of the children to the

prophet—"Go up, thou bald head." He went from boat to boat, counselling, entreating, expostulating with them, and praying for them.

"Surely," said he, "the Lord of the Sabbath will not hold ye guiltless for this profanation of his holy day." But, at that period, vital religion was but little felt or understood upon the Borders, and they regarded not his words.

He went to one boat, which was the property of members of his own congregation, and there he found Agnes Crawford, the daughter of one of his elders, hanging upon the neck of her husband, and their three children also clung around him, and they entreated him not to be guilty of breaking the Sabbath for the sake of perishing gain. But he regarded not their voice; and he kissed his wife and his children, while he laughed at their idle fears. Mr. Simpson beheld the scene with emotion, and approaching the group—"John Crawford," he exclaimed, addressing the husband, "you may profess to mock, to laugh to scorn the words of a feeble woman; but see that they return not like a consuming fire into your bosom when hope has departed. Is not the Lord of the Sabbath the Creator of the sea as well as of the dry land? Know ye not that ye are now braving the wrath of him before whom the mighty ocean is a drop, and all space but a span? Will ye, then, glory in insulting his ordinances, and delight in profaning the day of holiness? Will ye draw down everlasting darkness on the Sabbath of your soul? When ye were but a youth, ye have listened to the words of John Knox—the great apostle of our country—ye have trembled beneath their power, and the conviction that they carried with them; and when ye think of those convictions, and contrast them with your conduct this day, does not the word *apostate* burn in your heart? John Crawford, some of your blood have embraced the stake for the sake of the truth, and will ye profane the Sabbath which they sancti-

fied? The Scotsman who openly glories in such a sin, forfeits his claim to the name of one, and publishes to the world that he has no part nor communion with the land that gave him birth. John Crawford, hearken unto my voice, to the voice of your wife, and that of your bairns (whose bringing up is a credit to their mother), and be not guilty of this gross sin." But the fisherman, while he regarded not the supplications of his wife, became sullen at the words of the preacher; and, springing into the boat, seized an oar, and, with his comrades, began to pull from the shore.

The thousand boats put to sea, and Mr. Simpson returned sorrowful from the beach to the kirk, while Agnes Crawford and her children followed him. That day he took for his text, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy;" and, as he fearlessly and fervidly denounced the crime of Sabbath-breaking, and alluded to the impious proceedings of the day, his hearers trembled, but poor Agnes wept aloud, and her children clung around her, and they wept also, because she wept. But, ere the service had concluded, the heavens began to lower. Darkness fell over the congregation—and first came the murmur of the storm, which suddenly burst into the wild howl of the tempest. They gazed upon each other in silent terror, like guilty spirits stricken in their first rebellion by the searching glance of the Omniscient. The loud voice of psalms was abruptly hushed, and its echo mingled with the dreadful music of the elements, like the bleating of a tender lamb, in the wind that sweepeth howling on the mountains. For a moment, their features, convulsed and immovable, were still distended with the song of praise; but every tongue was silent, every eye fixed. There was no voice, save heaven's. The church seemed to rock to its foundations, but none fled—none moved. Pale, powerless as marble statues, horror transfixed them in the house of prayer.

The steeple rocked in the blast, and, as it bent, a knell, untolled by human hands, pealed on the ears of the breathless multitude. A crash followed. The spire that glittered in the morning sun lay scattered in fragments, and the full voice of the whirlwind roared through the aisles. The trees crouched, and were stripped leafless; and the sturdy oak, whose roots had embraced the earth for centuries, torn from the deep darkness of its foundations, was uplifted on the wings of the tempest. Darkness was spread over the earth. Lightnings gathered together their terrors, and, clothed in the fury of their fearful majesty, flashed through the air. The fierce hail was poured down as clouds of ice. At the awful voice of the deep thunder, the whirlwind quailed, and the rage of the tempest seemed spent.

Nothing was now heard save the rage of the troubled sea, which, lashed into foam by the angry storm, still bellowed forth its white billows to the clouds, and shouted its defiance loud as the war-cry of embattled worlds. The congregation still sat mute, horrified, death-like, as if waiting for the preacher to break the spell of the elements. He rose to return thanks for their preservation, and he had given out the lines—

> "Lord, in thy wrath rebuke me not,
> Nor in thy hot rage chasten me,"

when the screams and the howling of women and children rushing wildly along the streets, rendered his voice inaudible. The congregation rose, and hurrying one upon another, they rushed from the church. The exhortations of the preacher to depart calmly were unheard and unheeded. Every seat was deserted, all rushed to the shore, and Agnes Crawford and her children ran, also, in terror, with the multitude.

The wrecks of nearly two hundred boats were drifting among the rocks. The dead were strewed along the beach,

and amongst them, wailing widows sought their husbands, children their fathers, mothers their sons, and all their kindred; and ever and anon an additional scream of grief arose, as the lifeless body of one or other such relation was found. A few of the lifeless bodies of the hardy crews were seen tossing to and fro; but the cry for help was hushed, and the yell of death was heard no more.

It was, in truth, a fearful day—a day of lamentation, of warning, and of judgment. In one hour, and within sight of the beach, a hundred and ninety boats and their crews were whelmed in the mighty deep; and, dwelling on the shore between Spittal and North Berwick, two hundred and eighty widows wept their husbands lost.

The spectators were busied carrying the dead, as they were driven on shore, beyond the reach of tide-mark. They had continued their melancholy task for near an hour, when a voice exclaimed—"See! see!—one still lives, and struggles to make the shore!"

All rushed to the spot from whence the voice proceeded, and a young man was perceived, with more than mortal strength, yet labouring in the whirling waves. His countenance was black with despair. His heart panted with suffocating pangs. His limbs buffeted the billows in the strong agony of death, and he strained, with desperate eagerness, towards the projecting point of a black rock. It was now within his grasp, but, in its stead, he clutched the deceitful wave that laughed at his deliverance. He was whirled around it, dashed on it with violence, and again swept back by the relentless surge. He threw out his arms at random, and his deep groans and panting breath were heard through the sea's hoarse voice. He again reached the rock—he grasped, he clung to its tangled sides. A murmur moaned through the multitude. They gazed one upon another. His glazed eyes frowned darkly upon them. Supplication and scorn were mingled in his look.

His lips moved, but his tongue uttered no sound. He only gasped to speak—to implore assistance. His strength gave way—the waters rushed around the rock as a whirlpool. He was again uplifted upon the white bosom of the foam, and tossed within a few yards of the wailing but unavailing crowd.

"It is John Crawford!" exclaimed those who were enabled to recognise his features. A loud shriek followed the mention of his name—a female rushed through the crowd, and the next moment the delicate form of Agnes Crawford was seen floating on the wild sea. In an instant, a hundred plunged to her rescue; but, before the scream of horror and surprise raised by the spectators when they beheld her devoted but desperate purpose, had subsided, she was beyond the reach of all who feared death. Although no feminine amusement, Agnes, from a child, had delighted in buffeting the waters as though she felt at home upon their bosom; and now the strength of inspiration seemed to thrill through her frame. She was hidden from the gaze of the marvelling spectators, and a deep groan crept along the shore. She again appeared, and her fair hand grasped the shoulder of the drowning man! A shout of wild joy rang back on the deserted town. Her father, who was amongst the multitude, fell upon his knees. He clasped his hands together—"Merciful Heaven!" he exclaimed, "Thou who stillest the tempest, and holdest the waters in the hollow of thy hand, protect—protect my child!"

The waters rioted with redoubled fury. Her strength seemed failing, but a smile of hope still lighted up her features, and her hand yet grasped her apparently lifeless burden. Despair again brooded on the countenances of her friends. For a moment, she disappeared amongst the waves; but the next, Agnes Crawford lay senseless on the beach, her arm resting on the bosom of him she had

snatched from a watery grave—on the bosom of her husband.

They were borne to their own house, where, in a few minutes, she recovered; but her husband manifested no sign of vitality. All the means within their power, and that they knew, were resorted to, in order to effect his resuscitation. Long and anxiously she wept over him, rubbing his temples and his bosom, and, at length, beneath her hand his breast first began to heave with the returning pulsation of his heart.

"He lives!—he breathes!" she exclaimed; and she sank back in a state of unconsciousness, and was carried from the room. The preacher attended by the bedside, where the unconscious fisherman lay, directing and assisting in the operations necessary for restoring animation.

In a few hours the fisherman awoke from his troubled sleep, which many expected would have been the sleep of death. He raised himself in the bed—he looked around wistfully. Agnes, who had recovered, and returned to the room, fell upon his bosom. "My Agnes!—my poor Agnes!" he cried, gazing wistfully in her face—"but, where—where am I?—and my bairnies, where are they?"

"Here, faither, here!" cried the children, stretching out their little arms to embrace him.

Again he looked anxiously around. A recollection of the past, and a consciousness of the present, fell upon his mind. "Thank God!" he exclaimed, and burst into tears; and when his troubled soul and his agitated bosom had found in them relief, he inquired, eagerly—"But, oh, tell me, how was I saved?

"John," said the aged elder, the father of Agnes, "ye was saved by the merciful and sustaining power o' that Providence which ye this morning set at nought. But I rejoice to find that your heart is not hardened, and that the awful visitation which has this day filled our coast

with widows and with orphans, has not fallen upon you in vain; for ye acknowledge your guilt, and are grateful for your deliverance. Your being saved is naething short o' a miracle. We a' beheld how long and how desperately ye struggled wi' the raging waves. A scream burst upon my ear—a woman rushed through the crowd—and then, John!—oh, then!"——But here the feelings of the old man overpowered him. He sobbed aloud, and pausing for a few moments, added—"Tell him, some o' ye."

The preacher took up the tale. "Hearken unto me, John Crawford," said he. "Ye have reason, this day, to sorrow, and to rejoice, and to be grateful beyond measure. In the morning, ye mocked my counsel and set at nought my reproof; and as ye sowed so have ye reaped. But, as your faither-in-law has told ye, when your face was recognised from the shore, and your name mentioned, a woman screamed—she rushed through the multitude—she plunged into the boiling sea, and in an instant she was beyond the reach of help!"

"Speak!—speak on!" cried the fisherman eagerly; and he placed his hands on his heaving bosom, and gazed anxiously, now towards the preacher, and again towards his Agnes, who wept upon his shoulder.

"The Providence that had till then sustained you, while your fellow creatures perished around you," added the clergyman, "supported her. She reached you—she grasped your arm. After long struggling, she brought you within a few yards of the shore; a wave overwhelmed you both and cast you upon the beach, with her arm—the arm of your wife that saved you—upon your bosom!"

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed the fisherman, pressing his wife to his bosom—"my ain Agnes!—was it you?—was it you?—my wife!—my saviour!" And he wept aloud, and his children wept also.

But the feelings of the wife and the mother were too

strong for words. I will not dwell upon the joy and gratitude of the family to whom the husband and the father had been restored as from the dead. It found a sorrowful contrast in the voice of lamentation and of mourning, which echoed along the coast like the peal of an alarm-bell. The dead were laid in heaps upon the beach, and, on the following day, widows, orphans, parents, and brothers, came from all the fishing towns along the coast, to seek their dead amongst the drowned that had been gathered together; or, if they found them not, they wandered along the shore to seek for them where the sea might have cast them forth. Such is the tale of the Sabbath wrecks—of the lost drave of Dunbar.

END OF VOL. VI.

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